- **Lifestyle / C1** Year of the Rooster: Not exactly positive for growth, prosperity
- **SundayBiz / B2** Maid turned farmer tops rice yield in Pangasinan
- **World / A8** Pope John Paul II offers special Mass for tsunami victims
- **News/ A4** Six suspected shabu dealers shot dead in Davao City
- **Entertainment / A3-1** PDI interviews Barbra Streisand

Pinoy sculptor rues lack of wood for Paete carvers

By Volt Contreras

IF ONLY environmentalists, forestry officials and tree plantation owners could hear the lament of multi-awarded sculptor Eliodoro Cadawas Jr., a Chicago-based artist who has made it his mission to arrest the decline of his hometown's age-old art form because of the

PINOY/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'Flip-flop' and the year's other most abused words

CHICAGO—The US presidential campaign, the Iraq war and television broadcasts all provided words and phrases featured on a yearend list of misused, overused and generally useless terms compiled by a Michigan university.

FLIP-FLOP/ A6

"BER-RIFIC" TALAGA ANG LISTAHANG ITO!

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Sunday, January 2, 2005 ★★ 68 pages 9 sections Vol. 20 No. 25 P18

website: www.inq7.net

COUNTDOWN TO 2005
A party of about 10,000 packs the stretch of Paseo de Roxas and Ayala Avenue to make merry, to count their blessings and watch a 15-minute Makati fireworks show (at right) designed by foreign experts. A first-ever, the street party is going to be a yearly event in the hallowed tradition of the Times Square countdown in New York City.
RYAN LIM/ REM ZAMORA

2 more Pinays found dead

Bodies of entertainers trapped in hotel identified, says DFA

By TJ Burgonio

TWO FILIPINO women apparently trapped inside a hotel when gargantuan waves swamped beach resorts in Thailand have been confirmed dead, raising to five the number of Filipinos killed in the disaster, officials said yesterday.

Eighteen other Filipinos were believed still missing while 34 survived, according to an updated tally released by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

The bodies of Kathryn Joy Lomadilla and Ria Jane M. Tuzara, who were believed to be part of an entertainment group working at Hotel Sofitel on Khao Lak island, were identified by their colleagues, DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said in a phone interview.

"Two Filipinos told Consul (Stephanie Beatriz) Valera that on Dec. 26 they carried the remains of Tuzara and Lomadilla," Asuque said.

He said the pair "could have been trapped" when massive waves buffeted Sofitel at the height of tsunamis, which slammed into the coasts of nine countries in South Asia and Africa the day after Christmas.

Piles of bodies lay strewn around the hotel after the waves subsided.

"It [would be] a miracle if one survived there," Asuque said.

At least 50 Filipinos, mostly musicians, are working in Khao Lak, officials said.

Three of those previously reported missing have been found alive. The DFA identified them as Marian Pasag, Emily Balao and Jay William Decayco.

The three other Filipinos confirmed by the DFA to have been killed were Estelita C. Sales, 57, a tailor at the Sofitel; Ivy Catherine Tomenio-Terasaka, 32, and Sharleen May Ang Tan, 19.

Terasaka and Tan were on holiday with their families on Phuket island.

Terasaka, whose Japanese husband and three children are missing, was an alumna of the University of the Philippines. Tan was a biology sophomore at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Sales' son, Fresnel, was to fly to Bangkok to claim the body of his mother, Asuque said.

Three new names have been added to the list of missing persons. They were Anna Liza Villanueva, Jay Ocampo and Michelle Faustina Noel.

2 MORE/ A18

DEATH TOLL BY COUNTRY

Indonesia	80,246
Sri Lanka	28,729
India	8,942
Thailand	4,812
Somalia	200
Myanmar	90
Maldives	73
Malaysia	66
Tanzania	10
Bangladesh	2
Kenya	1

FOREIGN CASUALTIES BY NATIONALITY

Sweden	59
Germany	34
Britain	34
France	22
Norway	21
Japan	17
Italy	14
United States	15
Switzerland	13
Australia	11
Denmark	7
Singapore	7
Belgium	6
Netherlands	5
Austria	5
Canada	5
Finland	4
South Korea	4
South Africa	4
Brazil	2
Taiwan	2
Philippines	3
Poland	1
Russia	1
Colombia	1
New Zealand	1
Czech Republic	1
Turkey	1
Mexico	1
China	1

Elephants join relief drive to speed up delivery of aid

WARSHIPS, aircraft, trucks and even elephants were used in a giant relief and rehabilitation effort yesterday as frustration and anger over the slow delivery of fuel and food mounted among survivors of colossal tsunamis.

After a week of bickering among governments over how to speed up the operation and who should lead it, US Secretary of State Colin Powell met with UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to coordinate the global effort.

As the disaster darkened New Year celebrations around the world and the death toll neared 150,000, the United Nations warned that starvation and disease were pushing huge numbers of refugees in tsunami-devastated Aceh in Indonesia closer to death "every minute."

Aid commitments totalled about $1.86 billion after Japan pledged $500 million and US President George W. Bush, under pressure over the pace and scale of American aid to Asian tsunami victims, raised the US contribution to $350 million, 10 times the amount pledged two days ago.

Aid workers said supplies were beginning to reach survivors.

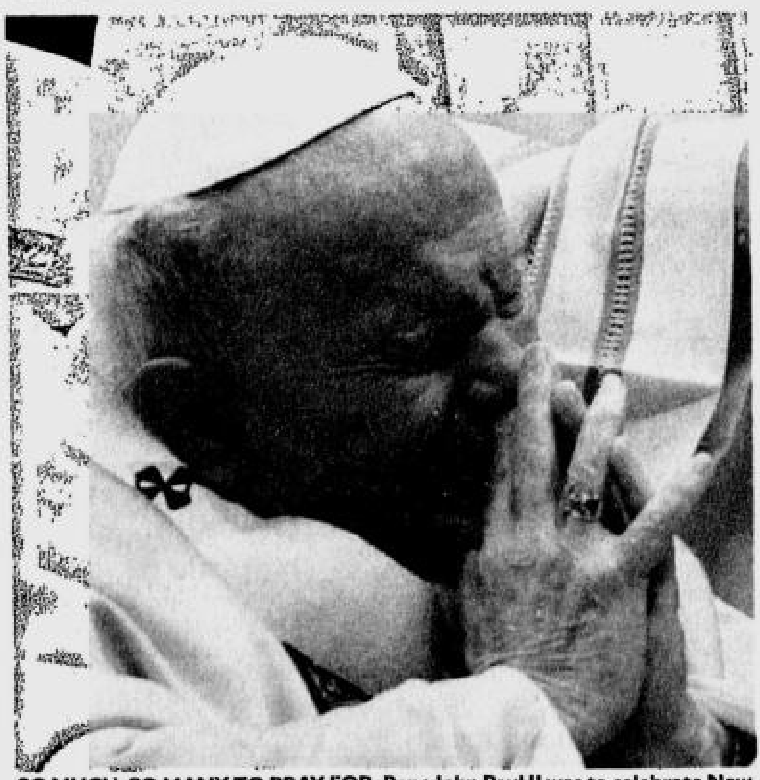
The Indonesian government said the death toll in Aceh from last week's earthquake and giant waves was likely to rise above 100,000. The confirmed figure stood at some 80,000 dead.

"Not since the eruption of Krakatoa in 1883 have we been hit so hard by the devastating wrath of nature," President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono said in a New Year's Eve speech, referring to a volcanic eruption and tsunami that killed 36,000.

"We mourn, we cry, and our hearts weep witnessing thousands of those killed left rigid in the streets. We witness those who survive almost losing hope and deep in sadness and confusion."

Elephants, Thailand's ancient war vehicles, were being brought in to help

ELEPHANTS/ A18



SO MUCH, SO MANY TO PRAY FOR. Pope John Paul II was to celebrate New Year's midnight Mass in his private chapel for the special intentions of the victims of the tsunami in 11 countries in South Asia. *(Story on Page A8.)* AP

Tips to donors: No gowns, used underwear, please; think of victims' dignity

By Volt Contreras

NEXT time you want to play Good Samaritan to victims of disasters, take every care not to make them fashion victims as well.

If you're donating clothes, don't include inappropriate clothing such as gowns or "see-through" outfits. Make sure the garments you are giving away are not "overused" and are still fit for wearing.

And please, no second-hand underwear.

These may sound amusing, but they are the "lessons" that the humanitarian group Tabang Mindanaw considers important enough to share with other disaster management teams following its recent experience with relief work in the storm-ravaged areas of Luzon.

Tabang executive coordinator Milet Mendoza said she was shocked to find that the clothes that well-meaning citizens had donated included items "just coming out of the closet after a long period of no use or even of overuse."

Mendoza acknowledged that Filipinos are generous providers of hand-me-downs for disaster victims.

"The volume is usually tremendous, but it will be helpful if the donor individual or organization were to take charge of quality control," she said.

Personal effects like underwear, for example, "should always be brand new, and please, no gowns or see-through faddish attire, which undoubtedly cannot protect from the cold and rain," she added.

"Donate only clothes and personal items that you yourself will find decent to use," she said.

Mendoza stressed these points in an instructional booklet she intends to send

TIPS/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers or thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over the eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy skies.
SOURCE: PAGASA

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

DepEd to tap students in school rehab

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE DEPARTMENT of Education would tap students and teachers of public schools nationwide in a major fund-drive to rebuild 1,348 public schools heavily damaged by last year's killer typhoons.

Education Secretary Florencio Abad said the students and teachers would not be required to shell out money, but would be asked to do something that may be just as important.

"Modest things like writing letters of encouragement to their fellow students and teachers are part of the psycho-social rehabilitation process. But sometimes that is not given any importance," said Abad.

The DepEd hopes to raise nearly half a billion pesos to rehabilitate the damaged schools.

Completely destroyed

Around 120 schools were reportedly completely destroyed by the recent typhoons which also killed thousands of people.

Aside from rebuilding classrooms and entire schools, Abad said that hundreds of thousands of destroyed chairs, desks, textbooks and other school facilities have also to be replaced.

The DepEd has put the damage at P453 million. It hopes to undertake the actual school reconstruction from January to March.

Damage to schools completely destroyed amounted to P25 million, while seriously damaged schools reached P172 million.

The Bicol region sustained the most damage, with 624 schools affected worth about P165 million.

In Cagayan Valley, 206 schools were damaged worth P64 million. In Central Luzon, 201 schools were damaged worth P65 million.

Not enough funds

Abad said the government does not have enough funds to rebuild these schools.

"The extensive damage in the schools caused by the typhoons can not be covered by the government allocation. We have to do our own outreach by launching Sagip Eskwela," he said.

NEW YEAR REVELRY TOLL

2 dead, 585 injured

By Alcuin Papa, Jerome Aning, Luige del Puerto and Leila Salaverria

THE NEW Year celebration yesterday was generally peaceful, resulting in fewer number of casualties from firecrackers, authorities said.

Two people were killed, police said, adding this was much lower than the 21 deaths reported in 2003.

The Department of Health recorded 585 injuries, which is about one percent lower than the figure of 590 injuries reported in 2003. The Philippine National Police, however, reported only 243 injuries.

A total of 33 injuries were caused by stray bullets. In 2003, only 15 injuries were due to stray bullets.

One of the two fatalities died from a stray bullet, police said.

The victim, whom police identified as Mary Jane Acuña, 10, was watching TV in one room of their two-story house in Tondo at around 12:30 a.m. yesterday when a stray bullet fell through the roof and hit her on the forehead.

She was rushed to a hospital by her parents but was declared dead at 7:05 a.m. yesterday.

Freak incident

Police said the other fatality died from what they described as a freak accident.

Senior Supt. Raul Medina of the Pasig City police said the victim, Ranel Papa Quimpo, 17, of Nagpayong, Barangay Pinagbuhatan, was impaled by a falling "*kwitis*" stick on the left temple.

"This is the first time I have heard of an accident like this," Medina said, adding they have not traced where the "*kwitis*" had come from.

Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil attributed the decrease in casualties to an intensified campaign for safety in handling firecrackers.

CLAUDI Abagon, 6, of Sauyo, Quezon City, cries in pain while being treated Saturday for second degree burns which he sustained when he lighted the gunpowder he collected from unexploded firecrackers after midnight. BOY CABRIDO

"Our alert level has been high and we have strong tie-ups with the local governments and other agencies like the DOH and media in enforcing firecracker zones. So our efforts have paid off and awareness of the public is high," Bataoil said.

He admitted that they have yet to reconcile their figures with that of the DOH, which had reportedly tallied more than 500 injured. But even so, Bataoil said the figures are still lower than last year.

Bataoil also said the hard times could have contributed to the low casualties.

He said police have not received reports of indiscriminate firing within its ranks.

PNP chief Director General Edgar Aglipay had warned policemen that they will face dismissal from the service and criminal charges if they fire their guns during the New Year celebrations.

The barrels of lawmen's service firearms were covered with masking tape before New Year's Eve to ensure none would be firing their guns indiscriminately during the revelry.

Police units under the Eastern Police District reported less firecracker injuries this year compared to last year.

EPD Chief Supt. Oscar Valenzuela said roughly 80 firecracker-related incidents in the district were reported as of 2 p.m. yesterday.

Of the number, 25 persons were briefly confined in hospitals. The rest suffered minor burns or wounds, and were promptly sent home.

In Quezon City and Camanava areas, police reported 134 injuries due to firecrackers. Ten other people were injured due to stray bullets.

Most of the firecracker victims either lost their fingers or ruptured their hands, police said.

The Northern Police District reported a major reduction in the number of firecracker injuries this year.

Chief Supt. Noe Wong, NPD chief, said 34 cases were reported in Caloocan, two in Malabon, 27 in Navotas and 16 in Valenzuela City.

Wong expressed satisfaction over the current figures which he said represented a major decline in casualties (injured) compared to those of last year in his turf.

Zero casualty

Meanwhile, Pateros did not report any injury arising from the revelry.

In a report yesterday sent to the Southern Police District Director, Pateros Chief Supt. Wilfrido Garcia said the town had zero incident rate.

A check with the Taguig-Pateros District hospital showed eight patients treated for minor burns. *With a report by Nancy C. Carvajal*

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Chavit: I have forgiven Erap

By Leila Salaverria

WITH the onset of the New Year comes new resolutions.

For Ilocos Sur governor Luis "Chavit" Singson, one of his resolutions is to forgive his enemies.

On New Year's Day, Singson said that he has forgiven former President Joseph Estrada and even wished the latter well after his successful knee surgery in Hong Kong.

"Get well soon, come back soon," Singson said yesterday when asked for his New Year's message to his former buddy with whom he had a falling out after he accused Estrada of receiving *jueteng* payoffs.

The expose led to the filing of plunder charges against Estrada and his eventual downfall in another bloodless revolution.

The Sandiganbayan which is hearing the plunder charges against Estrada has allowed the former president to travel to Hong Kong to undergo knee surgery, a trip that Singson had protested on suspicion that Estrada may never come back.

According to Singson, he made the greeting because he now bears no grudge against Estrada.

Baby boy born one minute into 2005

By Fe Zamora

BORN on the first minute of 2005, Latrell de los Reyes made a dramatic entrance that left his father bewitched and bewildered.

Fireworks lit up the skies as Latrell's mother, Mary Grace de los Reyes, made the final push to deliver her first-born, a bouncing 2.7-kg baby boy, at exactly 12:01 a.m. on Jan. 1, 2005, at the Quirino Memorial Hospital in Cubao, Quezon City.

Midwife Hazen Sales said the "crown"—or the top of the baby's head—actually appeared at the stroke of midnight. But Latrell was "completely out" only at 12:01 a.m., with coaching from resident obstetrician Dr. Czarina Mendoza, said Sales.

Cute

The baby, who was 48 cm long at birth, has black hair, a cute and sharp little nose and fair skin.

"He's got his mother's skin," gushed the baby's father, Mark Hayes, a second-generation black American-Filipino, who could not take his eyes off his newborn son.

"I want him to become a basketball player," said the 5'10" Hayes, a basketball enthusiast.

He said he named his son after the New York Knicks basketball player Latrell Sprewell.

"Does he have long fingers? And large hands?" were the first questions that Hayes thought to ask the nurses upon being told that Mary Grace had delivered a boy.

A college dropout who works part-time at the Ali Mall department store in Cubao, Hayes, 22, said he has yet to meet the parents of Mary Grace and ask for their daughter's hand. Mary Grace's family resides in Isabela province.

Overwhelmed

Mary Grace, 23, lives with an aunt in Loyola Heights and was a student at the National College of Business Administration (NCBA) when she became pregnant.

LATRELL: A dramatic entrance into the New Year. RAFFY LERMA

"I will marry her, but I have no permanent job yet. I don't even know how [I'm going] to pay the hospital bills," said Hayes whose grandfather was a black American soldier from Las Vegas.

But the overwhelmed young father already has plans to raise funds. He said he would sell his Pentium 2 computer "for P5,000" for the hospital bills.

He has also inquired from the nurses about how his young family could obtain some assistance from the social welfare department

High spirits

Despite the discouraging financial prospects, Hayes was in high spirits. He related how he had received an envelope containing P5,000 worth of gift checks from the McDonald's fast-food chain which had a sponsorship agreement with the hospital for the first four babies to be born there this year.

"I thought it was money, but this is fine," said the laughing Hayes.

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Globe strengthens DOT's tourist initiatives

For a country with a wealth of natural wonders and cultural delights like the Philippines, tourism plays an important role in the nation's economy as well as in promoting local customs and traditions. As a longstanding partner of the Department of Tourism – now under the dynamic stewardship of Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano – Globe Handyphone has been at the forefront of the government's tourism ventures, the latest being the Meet and Assist program at Terminal 1 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"When tourists arrive in the country, the first thing they notice is the airport," said Durano. "Their experience in the airport should mirror the hospitality that Filipinos are known for."

In line with the DOT's renewed efforts to project the Philippines as a premier tourist destination, Globe redesigned and enhanced the existing tourist assistance booths at Terminal 1, equipping it with touch screen airport maps and directory assistance, as well as providing essential guides such as maps, festival schedules, hotel listings and tour group brochures.

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Bilingual greeters proficient in Japanese, Korean and Mandarin will be on hand to assist non-English speaking tourists from East Asian countries, whose residents have markedly increased their visits to the country this past year. Dressed in the traditional costume of the country they are representing for easy identification, these interpreters are tasked to help overcome the language barrier that might hinder them from enjoying their stay in the Philippines.

Airport interpreters go through a rigid screening process. Globe scouts for potential candidates and recommends them to the DOT, who subjects them to an examination testing their language proficiency and knowledge of the tourism industry. Qualified applicants must undergo training under the Mabuhay Host Program before being allowed to go on duty at the airport. The Meet and Assist Program is currently operational at the NAIA Terminal 1, but plans are underway to expand the same service in Terminal 2 and Mactan Cebu International Airport.

But tourist assistance does not end once visitors have left the airport. Globe International Services ensures that foreign travelers remain connected through their mobile phone while island-hopping across the archipelago. Globe's international SMS, MMS and affordable $0.40 per minute IDD rate, along with its extensive nationwide coverage gives tourists clear connections to over 150 international roaming destinations. Visitors may avail of roaming assistance and other pertinent information, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through their roaming phone simply by dialing *188, Globe's mobile Travelers' Guide designed to meet the needs of every intrepid explorer. And with Globe's *187 Travelers' Internet, tourists need not find hotels and business centers to access the worldwide web.

Every tourist knows that traveling to distant places, may it be exotic and unknown or comforting and familiar, brings forth countless possibilities. As a trusted partner of the government's tourism-generating efforts, Globe plays its part in promoting the Philippines to the rest of the world, and in expanding the horizons of every traveler.

Prime movers of the DOT Meet and Assist program pose with the first batch of interpreters. Standing from left to right are: Dept of Tourism's Tony Bonita and Usec Oscar Palabyab; Japanese, Korean and Chinese Interpreters; Customs Collector Cesar Templo; DOT Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano; Bureau of Immigration Commisioner Alipio Fernandez; Filipina, Chinese and Korean Interpreters

Interpreters in various national costumes flank Secretary Durano and Globe Head of Postpaid Marketing Nikko Acosta.

Secretary Durano gives last-minute instructions to the team of interpreters.

Globe Handyphone's Nikko Acosta, MJ Hyndman and Cynthia Mangahas talk to Asst GM for Security Gen. Angel Atutubo and Tourism secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano

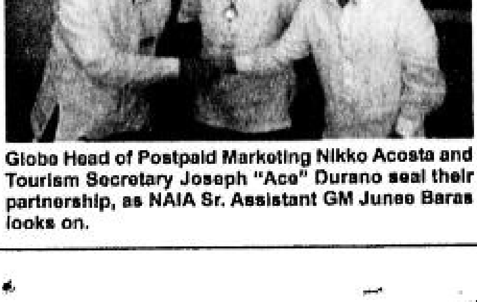
Secretary Durano talks to DOT's government and corporate partners.

Present at the press conference were (fr L-R): Nikko Acosta, Globe Head of Postpaid Marketing; NAIA Sr. Asst. GM Junee Baras; Tourism secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano; Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez; DOT Usec Oscar Palabayab; Asst GM for Security Gen Angel Atutubo

Newly arrived tourists flock around an interpreter on duty.

Interpreters wearing the traditional costumes of China, Japan and South Korea.

An airport interpreter assists two Korean tourists.


Globe Head of Postpaid Marketing Nikko Acosta and Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano seal their partnership, as NAIA Sr. Assistant GM Junee Baras looks on.

Newly refurbished DOT Tourist Information Center, courtesy of Globe Handyphone

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Gov't won't give up fight for Journal group, says PCGG

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE GOVERNMENT is not giving up its fight to regain control of Philippine Journalists Inc. despite allegations of multimillion-peso fund irregularities leveled against its previous management led by Malacañang-appointed PJI publisher and chair Roberto Capco.

"They're still in for a long fight. It's not yet over," Presidential Commission on Good Government special counsel and former assistant Solicitor General Cesario del Rosario said.

The PCGG has asked the Supreme Court to recall its Dec. 14 resolution ordering PJI's return to its former stockholders led by Rosario Olivares after 18 years of being sequestered. The high court, however, required the Olivares group to pay the P33.36-million balance of a dollar-denominated loan owed the government.

The PCGG, which sequestered PJI in 1986 on suspicion it belonged to ousted strongman Ferdinand Marcos' brother-in-law Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez, insisted that PJI's outstanding obligations as of March 2003 stood at P676.72 million.

According to the PCGG, only the President and Congress can condone public debts above P50 million.

Following the SC's ruling, the Sandiganbayan Fifth Division issued a writ of execution on Dec. 21 upon receipt of the P33.66 million payment and immediately turned over management and control of PJI to the Olivares group.

The antigraft court is handling the forfeiture case against Romualdez for his alleged ill-gotten wealth, which included PJI.

On Dec. 22, Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo asked the Sandiganbayan to nullify the writ of execution, saying it was premature since there has been no entry of judgment yet in the SC.

But a representative of the Olivares group insisted it was too late in the day for the PCGG and the OSG to act.

"They can do what they want to do but the Supreme Court's order has been implemented. That order is already final," acting PJI general manager Augusto B. Villanueva said in a phone interview.

Villanueva said they still have to secure all the company's assets, bank accounts and financial records since the former Palace-appointed PJI officers had refused to cooperate with them in the turnover of vital company documents.

Lawyers and auditors of PJI's have installed former owners also reportedly discovered fund anomalies allegedly committed by the former PJI board of directors, led by Capco and Bobby de la Cruz, former PJI president and CEO, shortly after they took control of the publishing group on Dec. 21, 2004.

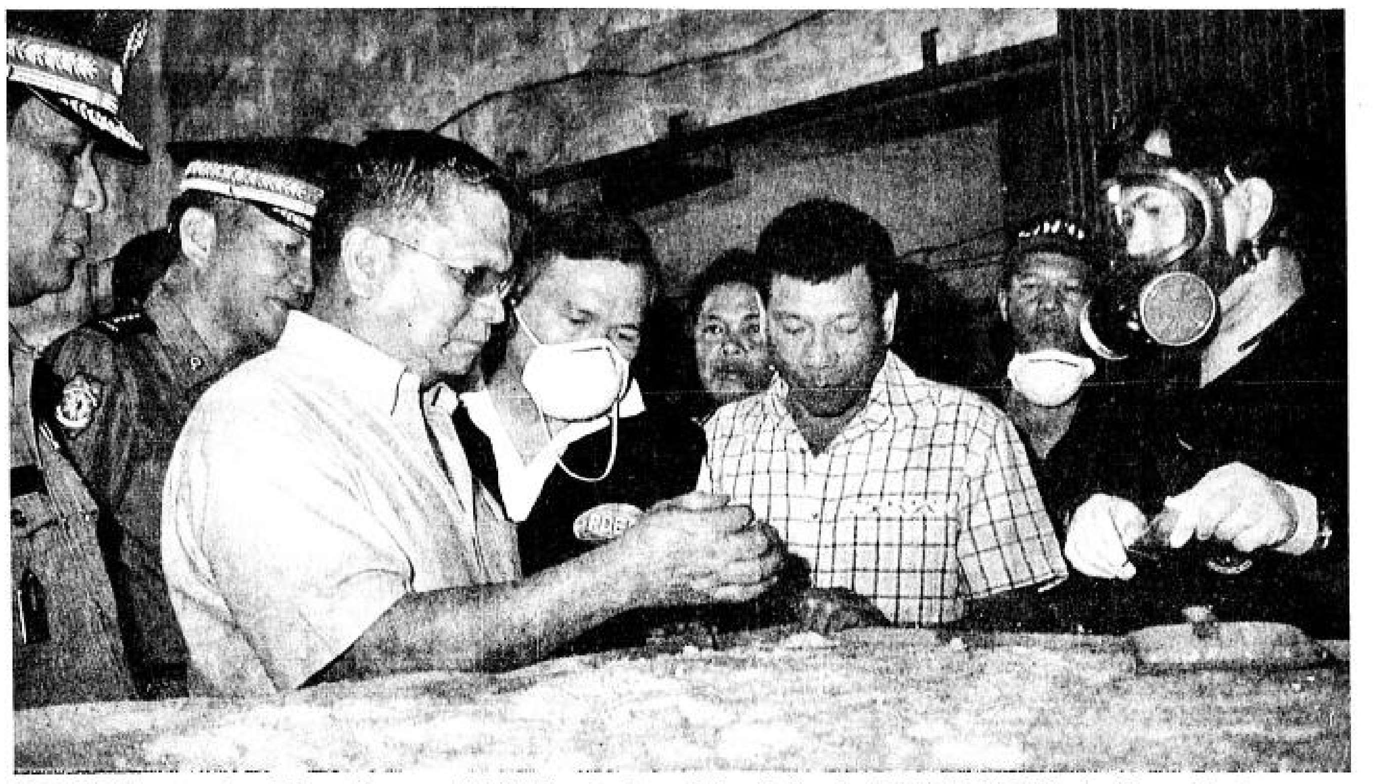
Villanueva accused the former Palace-appointed PJI officials of mismanaging the company's finances.

He pointed out that PJI employees did not receive their 13th month pay and other benefits due them in December.

"The PCGG should know that the people they appointed here are all crooks. The company is suffering from their officials," Villanueva said.

He said the former PJI officials fled when Sandiganbayan sheriff Edgardo Urieta served the writ of execution last Dec. 21.

PJI's new lawyers have sent a letter to De la Cruz, Capco, lawyer Ruby Ruiz Bruno, the former PJI corporate secretary and chief legal officer and Ceferino M. Arellano, former treasurer and chief finance officer, saying, "We have received reliable information that you have withdrawn and (are) withdrawing large sums of money from various bank(s) where PJI funds are deposited, and will be disbursing the same to deprive Mrs. Rosario Olivares and the other stockholders of the assets of PJI prior to the takeover of the management and control of the said company by the said stockholders..."



INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes (foreground), PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay (behind him), PDEA Director General Anselmo Avenido (with mask) and Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte examine the shabu found in a Davao drug lab that was raided by authorities on Friday.

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

6 suspected drug dealers killed in Davao City raid

By Alcuin Papa

SIX SUSPECTED drug dealers were killed in a gun battle with police who raided their shabu laboratory in Davao City Friday evening.

The raid led to the confiscation of 76 kilos worth P152 million of processed shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride) ready for shipping to the streets, said Philippine National Police (PNP) spokesperson Sr. Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil.

Bataoil said investigators had yet to identify the suspects, all males whom he described as "Oriental-looking."

He said two members of the raiding team, whom he did not identify, were hit by bullets in the torso but were protected by their bullet-proof vests.

Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes and PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay flew to Davao City to inspect the shabu lab yesterday morning.

Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, whose no-nonsense approach toward crime in his city is well-known, was reportedly irked by the discovery of the warehouse after local police officials had earlier denied the existence of drug labs in Davao.

Bataoil said the raid was carried out on the new warehouse on MacArthur Highway in Toril District by members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (AID-SOTF), the Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) team based in Mindanao and local police.

Armed with a search warrant issued by a Davao City court, the raiding team swooped down on the building as a vehicle was entering its gates but they were met with stiff resistance. A shoot-out ensued, leading to the deaths of all the suspects, Bataoil said.

"They (raiding team) were met with heavy resistance and this resulted in a full-blown fire-fight," the police official told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

After the smoke cleared, the bloodied suspects were brought to the Davao Sanitarium Hospital where they were declared dead, Bataoil added.

Police also recovered laboratory equipment and chemicals, two .45-cal. pistols and a 9mm pistol. The new warehouse was reportedly thought to be where a brand of orange juice was being produced.

Supt. Wilkins Villanueva, PDEA chief in Davao City, said the shabu laboratory was placed under surveillance months before Friday's raid.

The United States Drug Enforcement Agency, the Taiwan Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau and the Taiwanese police helped make the raid possible, Bataoil said, without going into detail.

He said follow-up operations were being conducted against the accomplices of the suspects.

On Wednesday, authorities raided three shabu laboratories in the provinces of Bataan and Bulacan, recovering a haul of shabu, chemicals and equipment worth close to P13 billion.

Aglipay said the Bureau of Customs would also be investigated for allowing the entry into the country of chemicals and equipment used to make shabu. *With Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

WELCOME RESPITE

After the eve of revelry comes the morn of peace on the first day of the new year yesterday for this family of three on the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

DOJ: Pardon with parole for Jalosjos a possibility

By Philip C. Tubeza

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo could grant convicted child rapist former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos a pardon for humanitarian reasons, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said yesterday.

Gonzalez said that although Jalosjos had yet to serve the minimum of his sentence, he could receive a "conditional pardon with parole conditions" because of his reported heart ailment.

"Based on the reports of his doctors, I think for humanitarian reasons he could be granted a conditional pardon with parole conditions," Gonzalez said.

"I suppose if he is really sick, he is entitled to that," he added.

Jalosjos was reportedly rushed recently to the Makati Medical Center from the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City where he is serving two life terms for the rape of an 11-year-old girl seven years ago.

It was the second time he was rushed to the same hospital, the first being on Oct. 2, 2004, after he reportedly suffered a heart attack.

Gonzalez said he reviewed Jalosjos' case after he visited the former lawmaker in November at the NBP after his first confinement.

"When I last visited the NBP, I saw him and he was not fully well," Gonzalez said.

"His doctors told him he should have a heart bypass but he said he was afraid to undergo it," Gonzalez added.

Gonzalez said the Board of Pardons and Parole had told him Jalosjos was not eligible for parole because he had not yet served the minimum of his two life sentences.

"Strictly speaking, (he is) not yet (eligible). But for humanitarian reasons, some kind of parole could be granted," Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said that should Jalosjos be pardoned the government could set parole conditions like his having to report to the authorities every month; he must not commit any other crimes, and he cannot leave the hospital without approval from authorities.

"If he violates any of these conditions, I could have him re-arrested immediately," Gonzalez said.

Jalosjos' mother, Angelina, made an emotional appeal to the President on national radio on Wednesday morning asking for a pardon for her son to allow him to seek proper medical treatment and enable them to be reunited in her latter years.

All signs point to peace, progress in Mindanao

By Saeed A. Daof

(The author is the director general of the Center for the Promotion of Peace and Development in Mindanao. As the former MILF Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and concurrent chair of the MILF economic development committee, he strongly recommended the resolution of differences by resuming the peace talks and placing socioeconomic development and education of the people in the major talking points in the GRP-MILF peace talks. His e-mail is sdaof2000@yahoo.com)

THE WAR in Mindanao between the Philippine government (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front has been going on for 25 years. It has caused the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, displaced and rendered homeless about a million people, wrought havoc to the Philippine economy, and stifled development.

But because of Mindanao's strategic location and vast economic potential, there are concerted efforts on the part of local and foreign stakeholders to help end the war. This war may come to an end following the forthcoming resumption of the GRP-MILF peace talks in Malaysia.

Winds of change

Both sides apparently have come to grips with the reality that guns and bullets will not solve or attain their respective objectives—the MILF's dream of a Bangsamoro Islamic State for now, and the GRP's desire to assimilate the insurgents and their families into mainstream society, and to move on toward the expeditious transformation into a productive state the vast Mindanao resources in natural gas, oil, gold, nickel and other mineral deposits as well as large tracts of land suited for agribusiness and agroindustrial pursuits and integration.

These winds of change to resolve differences by negotiation instead of violence—a prescription I had strongly recommended all along—together with prioritizing socioeconomic development and the education of the people and initiating a partnership of cooperation in reconstruction and development of the region was boosted by the sudden removal of major constraints.

The GRP dropped its criminal and civil cases against 185 MILF leaders and members who were accused of terrorism, bombings and kidnappings for ransom—a pragmatic decision on the part of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Shift in emphasis

For its part, the MILF publicly condemned terrorism and cooperated in decimating the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang that had been using MILF enclaves for its operations, and lately it has been forging cooperation in combating terrorism.

Additionally, there has been a subtle shift in emphasis from the MILF political demand for an independent Islamic State—long the major contentious issue in the talks—to "moderate talking points" involving the reconstruction and development of the region. Both parties have thus pursued these confidence-building measures to resume the peace talks.

The sudden postponement of the November 2004 elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao was a further factor. The elections were postponed to next year under the guise of fiscal constraints. This indicates that the government is "buying time" to attract and allow the MILF to participate in that election, assuming that a peace settlement could be reached with ample time to campaign.

It also gives credence to the growing perception that the MILF leadership is being attracted to take governance in the ARMM—just as the MILF's former parent organization, the Moro National Liberation Front, succeeded in getting from the GRP-MNLF peace agreement another apparent "sweetening of the pie" and confidence-building measure and bargaining chip that could further enhance the peace process.

Shot in the arm

Malaysia's formal agreement to host the GRP-MILF peace talks, and recent reiteration I learned in person from Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi and some of his senior advisers during my recent visit to Malaysia—about the interest of the government of Malaysia to help the GRP and the MILF to reach a settlement by acting as "facilitator-observer"—is an immeasurable "shot in the arm" to the Mindanao peace process.

While undoubtedly incurring a considerable amount of responsibility and risk to its prestige, Malaysia's decision nonetheless is an astute gambit in furthering better relations and cooperation with the Philippine government, especially at a time when there is agitation to reopen the Philippine Sabah claims, and discuss compensation to the heirs and subject claimants of the Royal Sultanate of Sulu.

Settlement issues

The resumption of the peace talks and reaching a formal peace settlement are only parts of the whole Mindanao peace process, however.

The test or measure of success of the accord is in its effective and efficient implementation on the ground with local and foreign stakeholders competing to get a piece of the action—whether geopolitical or economic—in Mindanao's post-war reconstruction and development.

The planning and execution of the development process, attraction of foreign investment, prevention of the "birth" or "growth" of Muslim and Christian groups who may reject or accept the accord, and the installation of checks and balances to safeguard development funds are food for thought that will occupy negotiators," would-be post-war implementers and other stakeholders when an accord is finally concluded and signed.

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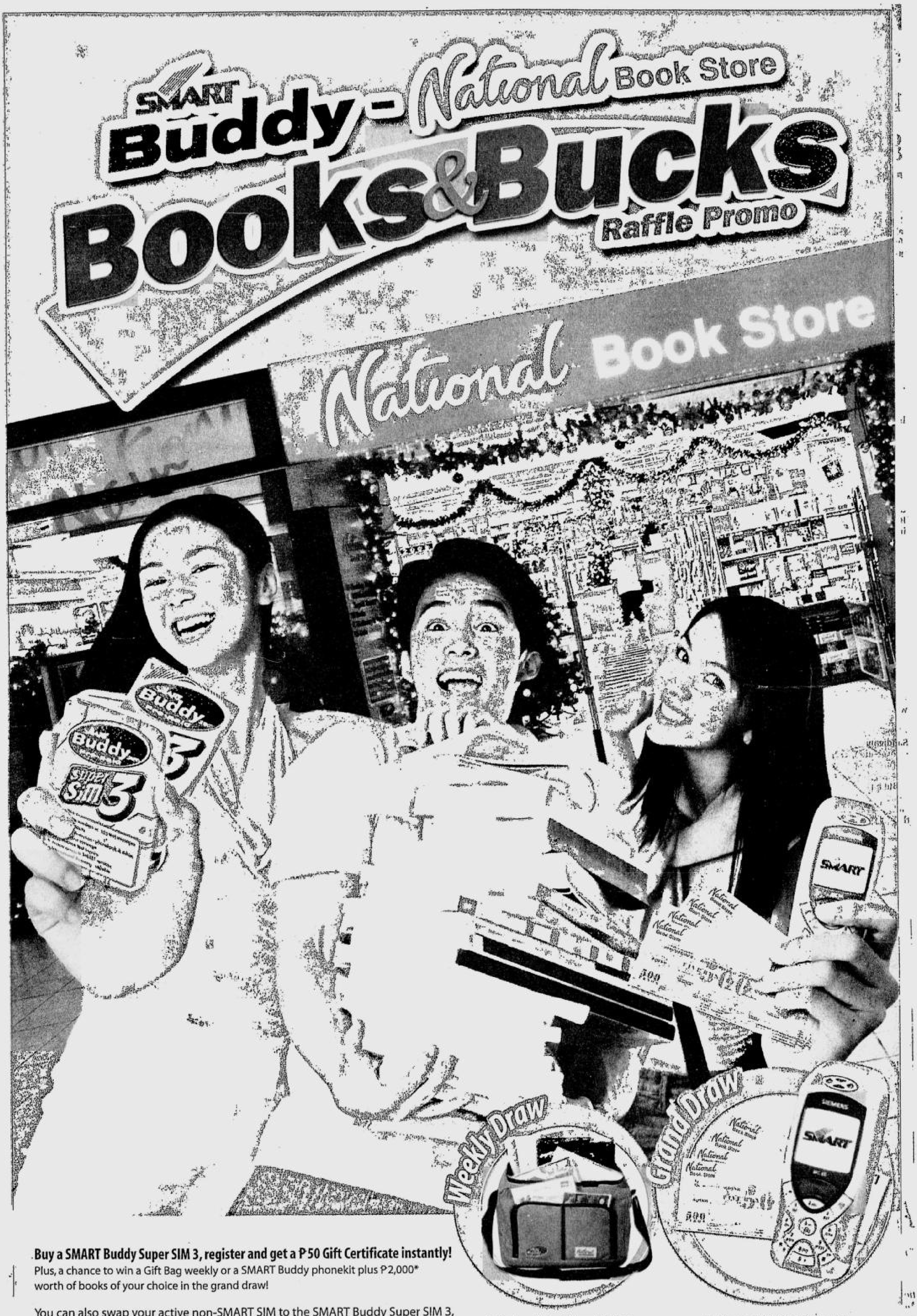

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From page A1

out to other humanitarian organizations, including the government, in the hope that it would help to "improve" the way the community responds to major calamities.

Mendoza was one of those who helped launch "Operation Sagip Buhay," a multi-sectoral initiative that also included the INQUIRER to help the victims of the floods and landslides that devastated some of the provinces in Luzon last month.

Since its launch, Operation Sagip Buhay has handed out relief goods worth P5.8 million to 10,874 families in Infanta, Quezon, Mendoza said.

Each family received at least two relief packs between Dec. 7 and 30, and distribution of these is continuing. About 2,100 families were also provided medical assistance.

Mendoza wants to share the "insights" from that operation even as Filipinos witness yet another example of nature's wrath in the recent tsunami onslaught in South Asia.

Apart from citing the importance of speed, coordination, transport, security and communication lines for the success of massive relief operations, Mendoza also suggested how to put together a "standard relief package."

Standard food relief

"For a family of six, an acceptable standard food relief package for two days that would provide 2,100 calories per person per day should consist of the following: 5 kg of rice, 360 grams of protein— either canned pork, beef, tuna, sardines, beans or chicken; dried fish is the best alternate but expensive and needs cooking—60 grams of iodized salt, 240 grams of brown sugar and 360 grams of cooking oil," she said.

Mendoza said this menu was based on the standards set by the United Nations World Food Program and the High Commissioner for Refugees.

"Let us be aware that sufficient food and nutrition, and safe water, remain to be the priority as these aid in building the resistance of the disaster victims to sickness and disease aggravated by exposure to harmful elements," she said.

Volunteers should also help to keep disaster survivors not just well-fed but, even more important, well-informed.

Mendoza said residents in calamity areas could benefit from a public address system and something as simple as a bulletin board mounted in key spots like hospitals, municipal halls, town plazas, churches, barangay centers and schools.

Information boards

The bulletins should show, for example, the safe places to stay in to prevent people from "unnecessarily wandering with no specific direction and exposing themselves to further risks," she said.

Information about the dead and missing should also be posted on these information boards for the sake of the "anxious" survivors, she added.

Mendoza also advised would-be Samaritans to keep the dignity of the victims uppermost in their minds.

Dignity

Victims of disasters have no choice but to depend on relief assistance. As such, those who respond to their plight should do so "with as much respect for the dignity of the human person," she said.

"Seeing relief response from the viewpoint of a victim may help. Let us hope and pray that we will not find ourselves on the other end of the receiving line someday," Mendoza said.

AWARD-WINNING sculptor JR Cadawas at work on a buffet display.

Pinoy sculptor rues lack of wood ...

From page A1

diminishing sources of wood.

Cadawas, who has come home to accept the Pamana ng Pilipino Award from Malacañang as an outstanding overseas Filipino, bewailed how he has made millionaires out of some of his foreigner apprentices while the young craftsmen of his native Paete, Laguna, the country's wood-carving capital, are being forced to abandon the craft as raw materials become scarcer and more expensive.

GMA award

Cadawas, who himself trained in the craft in Paete's backyard shops as a teener, has won more than 120 international contests and citations for his work.

The latest of these honors was bestowed on him by President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang on Dec. 15. Cadawas, nicknamed JR, was a college dropout whose natural talent with the chisel became his ticket out of hard times and earlier struggles as a "TNT" (*tago-ng- tago* or illegal alien) in the United States.

JR is referred to in various articles written about him as the "fastest carver" in the US.

Bust of Rosie O' Donnell

He has his own studio in the Windy City where he works on the commissions he gets from private collectors, churches and hospitals, including US comedienne Rosie O'Donnell whose bust he is carving.

The much-sought-after Cadawas, whose name may not be that familiar in local art circles because he has been based abroad since 1981, can execute the most intricate designs, his favorites being depictions of Philippine culture and folklore.

He picked up the skill in high school, sometimes skipping classes just to earn a quick buck, churning out decorative spoons and forks for a Paete shop.

Odd jobs

He went on to various jobs that included doing carpentry in Saudi Arabia and carving up ice, butter, fruits or vegetables for gourmet buffets on a luxury ocean liner.

Filipinos can, however, see what could well be Cadawas' greatest work—a relief sculpture of St. James the Apostle on horseback at the gate of the historic Fort Santiago in Intramuros, Manila. This was a restoration job that he and two other carvers were commissioned to do in 1980 by Imelda Marcos, for which he got paid P400 a day for five weeks.

The 9' x 8' replica—the original was destroyed in the bombing of Intramuros during World War II— is actually made up of eight wood panels fastened together.

JR says jokingly that if some catastrophe were to befall the country and the piece broke, archeologists would see "my signature" on the sides where the panels are joined.

Pamana Award

In an interview after he received the Pamana Award, the 54-year-old Cadawas said he would use his visit and whatever access to government officials he may have to obtain help to save his hometown's once-flourishing trade.

"Paete used to have *ukitan* (wood shops) in every other house," he said.

The town derives its name from the "*paet*,"—Tagalog for chisel—and has been famous both for its artists and mass-production carvers even before the Spanish colonial era.

Batikuling tree

"But now you can easily count what's left of these shops because the logging ban covers our chief material, the batikuling tree," Cadawas said in Filipino.

Paete shops get their supply of batikuling, a softwood species that grows wild in cold climates, mostly from the neighboring province of Quezon, according to Cadawas.

He believes the batikuling should be spared from any logging ban or, even better, should be grown by government-approved tree planters in large plantations.

Otherwise, Paete's old masters and budding talents, who Cadawas believes are worthy of a spot in "Ripley's Believe it Or Not" for their quick hands, creativity and stamina for handling bulk jobs, would just "go to waste."

"Help me find a way, if only I can talk to someone. Tell me the requirements and I'll have them done," he said.

Lack of wood

"I want to make our wood-carving famous in the world. We can compete with Europe, but what is there to show if we're losing enthusiasm because of lack of wood," he said.

Romeo Acosta, the director of the Forest Management Bureau, confirmed that the batikuling (*litsea leytensis*) has been one of the country's "highly regulated" trees since the late 1960s.

It is probably even rarer than the national tree, the narra, according to Acosta.

He said authorities recognize that this has been a problem for Paete and its industry for a long time because this particular tree species is a favorite of the town's woodcarvers.

"But if we deregulate it now, the more it will get scarce, for sure," Acosta said.

Because of the lack of wood, Paete's carvers have been shifting to resin and papier mache, said Cadawas.

"But the price [difference] between wood and resin is like comparing the whole arm to the small finger," he said.

'Ukitan' row

And like him, a growing number of younger wood workers in Paete have taken their skills out of the shop and into the kitchen, landing jobs as ice or food carvers in restaurants. In the ukitan row, such former employees have become known as "abroad-ers," he said.

Cadawas ended up in the United States while working as an ice carver on cruise ships whose home port was Miami, Florida. He "jumped ship" after encountering problems with his employer and became a "TNT" in Virginia, where he befriended and lodged with a native American.

The latter took Cadawas with him to Maryland where the carver lived in a garage and took advantage of his isolation by further honing his skills. In 1992, one of Cadawas' US-based cousins found him and helped him relocate to Chicago where again he shaped vegetables and cold cuts for cash in an Italian diner.

He eventually left the restaurant job "because I got bored," and convinced a Filipino friend to let him use the former's basement as his workshop. Two to three months after moving in, Cadawas started joining art competitions.

Between 1993 and 1995, he topped US-wide contests and racked up about 60 prizes.

Buffet decorator

In 1996, he applied for a green card. The immigration official asked him what "buffet decorator," the job he listed on his application, meant.

"It's hard to explain, but I can show you my portfolio," Cadawas recalled answering.

He got a green card for making it to the "extraordinary talent category."

Lectures, demos

Aside from bringing up his concern about the future of Paete's wood carvers, Cadawas will be giving lectures and demonstrations in Manila before he returns to the US later this month.

On Jan. 16, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) and the Hotel and Restaurant Management Association of the Philippines will be presenting him separately in vegetable and fruit-carving demonstrations. He will also be a guest of hotel and restaurant management students of the College of St. Benilde on Jan. 12.

A MUD-SWAMPED ricefield in Sitio Maypulot, Barangay Maysikat in Infanta, Quezon, is now a parched, cracked stretch of earth. With irrigation dikes destroyed, farmers were among those severely affected by the back-to-back typhoons that hit the province late last year. CERES P. DOYO

'Flip-flop' and the year's other most abused words

From page A1

Don't mention "flip-flop" unless referring to footwear, revile pitchmen who end commercials with the election-year tag line "... and I approved this message," and please, please do not say "You're fired!" even if your name is Donald Trump, it says.

Cliches from the worlds of public relations and rap also graced the list culled from more than 2,000 nominations submitted to the public relations department of Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, and released on Friday.

The list, issued annually since 1976, features terms the department considers deserving of banishment from everyday usage.

'Wardrobe malfunction'

For nearly a year, the world has been subjected to "wardrobe malfunction," a public relations agent's description of the Super Bowl halftime exposure of pop singer Janet Jackson's right breast.

Those words were "sure to be this generation's Watergate, misapplied to all situations both imaginable and not so," said list contributor David Edgar of Sydney, Australia.

Others sought to excise the prefix "ber" and the suffix "izzle"—each applied too liberally to add sizzle to otherwise straightforward words. Examples are "ber-rific" for something really great, and "fa'shizzle" instead of "for sure."

Bureaucratic euphemisms, redundancies and abbreviations also came in for criticism.

Pockets of resistance

Contributor Joe Hutley of Las Vegas said "pockets of resistance" sounded like someone having trouble with their pants instead of people shooting at each other.

"Enemy combatant" implied there were such people as friendly combatants, and other contributors wondered if an "improvised explosive device" was somehow worse than a bomb or mine.

"Blog," the Internet version of a diary that invites everyone to read it, inspired more confusion than annoyance.

"Sounds like a Viking's drink that's better than grog," said Teri Vaughn of Anaheim, California. "Maybe it's something that would be stuck in my toilet," said Adrian Whittaker of Canada.

'Webinar'

A "webinar"—a seminar held online—was viewed as "silly" by one contributor. And "safe and effective" and "erectile dysfunction" were seen as disinformation and too much information, respectively. *Reuters*

FUND-RAISING MOVE

Palace may sell coco shares

MALACAÑANG yesterday hinted of its plan to sell the sequestered 27 percent interest in San Miguel Corp. to raise funds for the cash-short government.

The plan surfaced after SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco lost a case to reclaim these shares at the Sandiganbayan.

"The Sandiganbayan decision affirming the government ownership of the 27 percent coconut funds should further strengthen our fiscal position," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in his weekly View From the Palace news.

Bunye, however, did not elaborate on how and when the government planned to sell the SMC shares. He did not return the INQUIRER's calls.

Last week, the Sandiganbayan rejected Cojuangco's appeal to regain control of 27 percent interest in SMC and 72.2 percent of United Coconut Planters Bank that were acquired through a coconut levy set up by former President Ferdinand Marcos.

The antigraft court said it found no legal basis to reconsider its May 2004 decision upholding the government's claim to the SMC shares and that it found nothing new in Cojuangco's appeal to overturn the forfeiture of the UCPB shares in July 2003.

The decision could pave the way for the government to sell the shares. *Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

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On December 24 of the same year, he began his second novena. This time he asked that a white rose be given as a sign. Four days after, a nun brought him one saying "St. Therese sent you this one." She proceeded to tell him that as she was passing by an altar where a picture of St. Therese hung, the white rose fell. She wanted to return it but instead thought of giving it to the priest. From then on, the priest received all the favors he petitioned. Fr. Putigan promised to spread the novena to increase devotion to St. Threrese and thus, bring her more honor.

The devotion has caught on as similar stories began to manifest. In the Philippines, one such account is that of Mrs. Rosaline P. Dizon, a known St. Therese devotee and wife of Rafael J. Dizon, Jr. Magnificat Ventures Corporation Chairman. When their family was in the United States, Rafael suffered a stroke. While he was at the hospital for treatment, the family gathered and prayed the St. Therese novena. Each of them requested only one thing: for their father to pull through his ordeal. Days later, each member received a rose in one form or another. Mrs. Dizon's twin sons received roses from a friend during graduation, others through text and e-mail. They believe that it was a divine occurrence rather than mere coincidence.

Today, spearheading the construction of the Shrine of St. Therese of the Child Jesus with the help of his family, is Rafael, Jr. now in the pink of health. The Shrine, once risen, is envisioned to be the center of devotion to St. Therese of the Child Jesus in Asia. To carry on Fr. Putigan's promise of spreading the novena and increasing devotion to St. Therese of the Child Jesus, members of their company will be distributing novena and chaplets in select churches within Metro Manila. The Twenty-Four "Glory Be to the Father" novena can be said any day. The ninth to the seventeenth days, however, are specially recommended, for it is during this time when all petitioners join as one community in prayer.

Help build her shrine. Know more about the devotion to St. Therese of the Child Jesus. Be a member of the Rose Warriors for St. Therese. Call Magnificat Ventures Corp. at tel. nos. 635-4680, 635-4482, 635-4527, 636-6279, construction site no. 853-9189, and cel. no. (0917) 890-4342. Or fax us at 687-1477. Or simply visit our Website at sttheresesshrine.com.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Pope John Paul II offers special Mass for victims of tsunamis

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II prayed for the victims of the Indian Ocean tidal waves during a special midnight Mass in his private chapel early Saturday, the Vatican said. Then after a few hours of rest, the ailing Pontiff presided over a New Year's Day Mass, dedicated to peace, in St. Peter's Basilica.

The Vatican didn't release details of the private service, but on Friday the Holy See's press office had said that the Pontiff would "remember the families of the victims and how much they are suffering in these days because of the consequences of the disaster, as well as those who are working to relieve the immense suffering of the stricken populations."

John Paul has made several appeals to encourage international relief efforts to help victims of the earthquake-triggered tidal waves which swamped coastlines in Asia and Africa.

The Roman Catholic Church dedicates the first day of each year to the theme of global peace.

"World Peace Day constitutes an invitation to Christians and to all men of good will to renew their determined commitment to build peace," John Paul said in his homily. "That presumes the embrace of a fundamental moral requirement, well expressed in the words of St. Paul: 'Don't let yourself be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.'"

"In the face of multiple manifestations of evil, which unfortunately wound the human family, the priority requirement is to promote peace, using the proper means, giving importance to dialogue, to the work of justice, and teaching about pardon," John Paul said.

"To conquer evil with the arms of love becomes the way in which each one can contribute to the peace of everybody," the Pontiff said. "This is the path which Christians and believers of various religions are called to take, together with all those who identify with universal moral law," John Paul said.

John Paul, 84, suffers from Parkinson's disease which makes it difficult for him to speak and move. Wearing gold-colored robes, he read the homily slowly but in a clear voice as he sat in a chair in front of the central altar of the basilica.

Crowded with tourists, pilgrims and Romans, the basilica echoed with religious chants.

Although John Paul's holiday schedule is somewhat lighter than several years ago, when he still enjoyed robust health, the pontiff has kept the major traditional appointments eagerly awaited by the faithful, and has held up well during the long public ceremonies. *AP*

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NY revelers observe silence in Times Square

NEW YORK—Hundreds of thousands of New Year revelers observed a moment of silence for the victims of the year's tragedies before kicking off celebrations to usher in 2005 in Times Square in the heart of New York.

Seconds before midnight, the glittering crystal ball descended the length of its column, then gave way to an enormous flashing "2005" as three tons of multicolored confetti drifted across the square and fireworks lit the sky.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell and New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg pushed the button to start the ball falling, at the annual celebration that marked its 100th anniversary this year.

Earlier, at the start of the evening, massive but orderly crowds joined in a moment of silence to honor victims of tragedies in 2004, in particular last week's earthquake and tsunamis that claimed more than 125,000 lives around South Asia.

"Recent tragic events remind us all that we are part of a global community," the ceremony's organizers explained.

"Here at the crossroads of the world, we want to take a moment of silence to honor all the loved ones that we have lost, and take comfort in the resiliency of the human spirit."

New York's celebration unfolded amid tight security, as it has ever since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Bags were searched, undercover police roamed the crowds, and helicopters circulated overhead.

But authorities implored residents and tourists not to stay away.

"Every year we have this event, we have a lot of expertise, people should feel safe to come here," New York police chief Ray Kelly said Friday, adding that authorities knew of "no specific threat" to the city festivities. *AP*

Death toll in Buenos Aires fire hits 175

BUENOS AIRES—Police arrested Friday the owner of a Buenos Aires club where at least 175 people died and 889 were injured in a blaze at the downtown disco crowded with 2,000 teenagers.

Mayor Anibal Ibarra said flares set off during the concert ignited the fire and that doors had been "locked with chains and padlocks."

"If the emergency exit had been open, so many people would not have died," he told reporters.

Mourners began placing flowers around the charred discotheque early Friday, after the fire began late Thursday.

Police arrested Omar Chaban, owner of the Cro-Magnon Republic club, who was questioned by a judge, a source at the interior ministry said. Charges were not immediately known.

"This is a disaster," a stunned Interior Minister Anibal Fernandez told reporters outside the club.

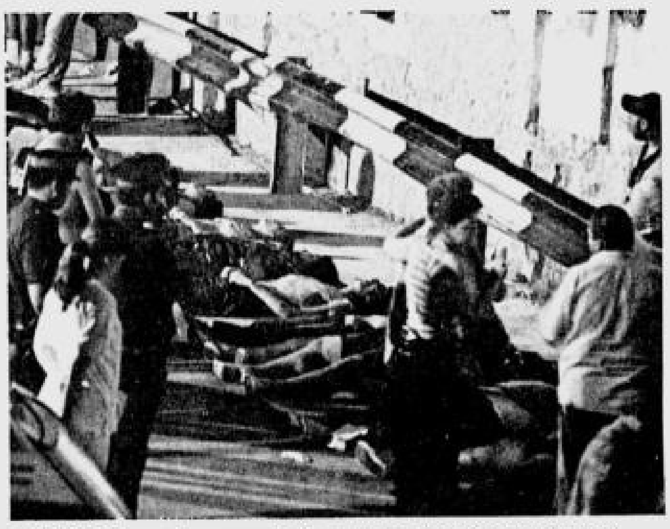
He said most of the clubgoers were aged 12-20, although others were under 10, as some Argentine nightclubs provide child care.

Fernandez blamed overcrowding and blocked emergency exits, lamenting that young revelers "were caught inside a death trap."

The head of Buenos Aires emergency services Julio Salinas said about 102 of the 889 injured were in "critical" condition.

The blaze, one of the worst in Argentine history, broke out just before midnight Thursday, at the disco in downtown Buenos Aires, local Health Secretary Alfredo Stein said.

He said 18 police officers were among the injured.



CORPSES lay on the ground in front of the discotheque where at least 175 people died and hundreds were injured in a fire on New Year's Eve in Buenos Aires. AFP

Bodies were lined up on the street as firefighters fought to put out the blaze. A chaotic scene unfolded outside the smoldering discotheque into the early hours Friday, as hundreds of police and firefighters mingled with teenagers and stunned parents searching frantically for their children.

Some distraught teenagers appeared on television attacking reporters and camera crews who were broadcasting live from the scene.

The revelers, mostly of secondary school age, were in the disco for a concert by the rock group Los Callejeros.

A number of witnesses said the fire started when a flare set a curtain on fire, while others said it was the ceiling that caught fire.

"People fired the flares into the ceiling, which was made of cloth and rubber," 15-year-old Cecilia Arce told reporters. "The rubber started burning, but with few or no flames, making a terrible smoke that choked you, killed you, if you breathed it."

The spreading fire and smoke reduced visibility.

"Suddenly, we couldn't see anything because of the smoke, and the fire spread to the stage area," another young man told a television reporter.

The witnesses said a mad dash for the exits began, with hundreds of people pressing into each other.

Several people said an emergency exit was shut and that other entrances and exits to the club remained closed while smoke filled the entire venue.

They said many of the victims died because, in the confusion, they ran away from the exits. *AFP*

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Colombia extradites Marxist leader to US for cocaine smuggling

BOGOTA—The most important rebel commander ever captured by Colombia was sent to the United States on Friday to face cocaine smuggling and kidnapping charges.

Colombia's president authorized the extradition of Ricardo Palmera, alias "Simon Trinidad," after the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, known by the Spanish initials FARC, failed to comply with an ultimatum to free 63 hostages including three Americans.

A federal court in Washington wants Palmera for trafficking cocaine and involvement in kidnapping the FARC's American hostages.

Palmera, arrested in neighboring Ecuador in January, was handed to US officials at a Bogota military airport and escorted onto a US-bound plane.

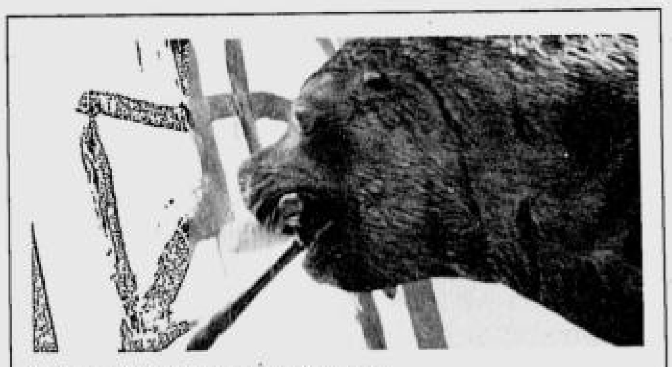
Wearing a bulletproof vest, his hands cuffed behind his back, the bald-headed revolutionary was seen on Colombian television shouting as he was guided to the aircraft. It was not possible to hear what he was saying.

No FARC rebel of the rank of Palmera—a 54-year-old former banker born into Colombian high society but radicalized by a murder campaign against leftists in the 1980s—has been sent to the United States before.

President Alvaro Uribe has increased extraditions of suspected drug traffickers to the United States. Earlier this month he handed over former Cali cartel boss Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela to US agents.

But Uribe had offered to suspend Palmera's extradition if the FARC freed its hostages by Thursday this week.

The FARC called the ultimatum blackmail and released no one, prompting Uribe to go on national television Friday evening from a southern jungle outpost where he was spending New Year's Eve with army troops. *Reuters*



CALLIGRAPHY EXHIBITION

Jonao, a sea lion, uses a brush to write a Chinese character which is translated as rooster at the Hakkeijima-Sea Paradise amusement park in Yokohama on New Year's Day. The sea lion's calligraphy performance was to celebrate the new Year of the Rooster. REUTERS

Iraq's 'Dr. Anthrax' dying of cancer; release sought

DUBAI—A top female scientist from Saddam Hussein's deposed regime should be freed from detention in Iraq as she is terminally ill with cancer, a lawyer said on Saturday.

Huda Salih Mahdi Ammash, accused of being a leader of Saddam's alleged biological warfare program and dubbed "Dr. Anthrax" by the tabloid press, was captured by US forces in May 2003.

Lawyer Badiaa Aref Ezzat, who is acting for former Iraqi deputy prime minister Tareq Aziz, called on Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, US President George W. Bush and aid groups to "assume their responsibility and free her."

"I urge immediate action because her state of health has deteriorated and she will certainly die," said Aref Ezzat, who last met with Aziz on Dec. 23 at a detention center outside Baghdad.

The lawyer said that the plea for the release of Ammash had been made at on the request of Aziz himself. "He asked me to do all I can in the case of Mrs. Ammash owing to the deterioration in her health as a consequence of the cancer she is suffering from."

Ammash was appointed to Iraq's ruling Baath Party's regional command in 2001 and is believed to have worked with another female biologist, Rihab Taha, known as "Dr. Germ," who is also held in a US-controlled jail in Iraq.

The pair are believed to be the only two women still held by US forces in the country. *AFP*

Iraq's Allawi vows decisive 2005; radical groups threaten vote

BAGHDAD—Hardline Islamists vowed to target Iraq's elections, just weeks away, as Prime Minister Iyad Allawi declared that Iraq's future lay with democracy.

In the dawn of 2005, the opposing visions of Iraq offered by Allawi, a vocal advocate of next month's polls, and fundamentalist hardliners revealed the high stakes in the war-torn country.

Allawi delivered his thoughts on state-owned Al-Iraqiya television, in a light blue shirt and a brick red tie in front of a row of books and an Iraqi flag.

"The new year will be decisive in the history of our nation and its future," he said.

"I wish my good nation a happy New Year and I hope it brings to Iraqis and the whole world happiness, prosperity and stability God willing," he said.

His speech was laced with images of Baghdad and ordinary people strolling in busy markets to mellow music.

"There will be no true economic growth if we do not rid ourselves of the old ways," said Allawi. "Economic and political progress require a democratic environment."

The three-minute message seemed like it was taped in Allawi's office in the fortified Green Zone, home to the interim government and the US Embassy.

The mayhem of post-Saddam Iraq intruded almost immediately after the broadcast, when a string of explosions rattled central Baghdad.

With an eye to the Jan. 30 polls, radical Islamist groups in Iraq, including al-Qaida-linked Ansar Al-Sunna, warned in a statement they considered democracy "un-Islamic" and threatened any voter.

"Those who participate in this dirty farce will not be sheltered from the blows of the mujahedeen," said a statement posted Thursday on an Islamist website, signed also by the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Army of the Mujahedeen.

US and Iraqi forces braced for violence. Adel Lami, of Iraq's Independent Electoral Commission, said about 100,000 police and national guard will be mobilized.

Iraqi voters are to choose a transitional 275-seat National Assembly, a parliament for the semi-autonomous Kurdish region and 18 provincial councils. *AFP*

Ukraine's PM resigns but still refuses to concede

KIEV—Ukraine looked with hope to the future Saturday at the onset of the New Year after Prime Minister Viktor Yanu-kovich resigned and all but admitted losing last weekend's historic presidential rerun vote.

In tumultuous scenes on Kiev's main Independence Square, 100,000 people packed into the city's central point to ring in the New Year with victorious opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko and Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili, who led a "rose" revolution in Tbilisi last year.

Speaking before the crowd as fireworks lit the night sky, Saakashvili hailed Ukraine's "orange revolution" that brought Yushchenko to power as "a triumph of good over evil."

Yushchenko—the declared winner of Sunday's presidential poll—took the center stage to reiterate that "Ukrainians had been independent for 13 years, but now they are free."

Yanukovich resigned from his post and said that his appeals over the Dec. 26 vote were unlikely to be granted, but stopped short of conceding defeat in the poll, which would have brought Ukraine's six-week election saga to an end.

"I have made a decision and am formally submitting my resignation," Yanukovich said in a televised address. "I find it impossible to occupy any post in a government headed by these authorities."

"Concerning the election results, we are keeping up the fight but I don't have much hope for a just decision from the central election commission and the supreme court," he said.

Yanukovich repeated his assertion that "external forces" were responsible for his defeat in the Dec. 26 vote.

But he got no support from Ukraine's outgoing President Leonid Kuchma, who called on the nation during his New Year address to "accept the democratic choice" made in the presidential poll.

"In 2005 Ukraine will have a new president and the whole Ukraine must accept this democratic choice as its own —because this man will need your support," he said without naming the election's declared winner, Yushchenko.

Kuchma spoke as tens of thousands of people massed in Independence Square, the epicenter of the "orange revolution" where shortly before midnight, pro-West Yushchenko and Saakashvili basked in the success of their respective peaceful uprisings against Soviet-era regimes.

Yushchenko's "orange revolution" marked the second year in a row that peaceful protests headed by a Western-leaning leader swept out a Russia-friendly regime in an ex-Soviet nation.

Moscow has accused the United States of fomenting the unrest in order to install allies in its strategic backyard, charges that Washington has denied.

But opposition movements in authoritarian-leaning former Soviet republics and Russia have hailed the peaceful uprisings and in the heat of the "orange" demonstrations, Belarussians, Armenians, Azeris and Russians mingled with Ukrainian protestors in central Kiev.

Yushchenko mounted 17 days of mass protests after he refused to concede defeat to Yanukovich in a Nov. 21 runoff because of fraud.

The Supreme Court annulled the election due to the massive ballot-rigging and ordered a historic rerun vote on Dec. 26, which Yushchenko won by more than 2.2 million votes. *AFP*

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NEW YEAR, NEW CURRENCY
Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan displays a new 1 New Kurus coin. Turkey entered the year 2005 with a new currency called "New Turkish Lira." REUTERS

Taiwan's Chen accuses China of threatening peace

TAIPEI—Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian on Saturday called China's proposed antisecession law a great threat to peace and warned Beijing not to underestimate the island's determination to defend its sovereignty.

Chen said in a New Year's address the law would provide a legal basis to invade Taiwan and allow China to unilaterally arbitrate cross-strait issues.

"Such actions will not only unilaterally change the status quo of peace in the Taiwan Strait, but will also pose the greatest threat to regional stability and world peace," he said.

The antisecession law, which China says is aimed at peaceful reunification with the self-ruled, democratic island it claims as its own, will be debated at a full session of China's rubber-stamp National People's Congress in March.

"We once again urge the Chinese Communist Party authorities not to underestimate the will of the Taiwan people in defending the sovereignty, security and dignity of the Republic of China," Chen said, using the island's official title.

Taiwan split from the mainland at the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949, but Beijing still sees the island of 23 million as part of Chinese territory and has pledged to bring it back into the fold, by force if necessary.

Tensions have been simmering in the Taiwan Strait since Chen's re-election in March 2004, as moves by the pro-independence leader to foster a separate Taiwan identity have made China's communist leaders increasingly nervous. *Reuters*

Sudan gov't, rebels ink deals

NAIVASHA—Amid singing and cries of joy, Sudan's government and southern rebels signed the final chapters of a peace deal on Friday, paving the way for a comprehensive accord ending Africa's longest-running civil war.

Delegates from the government and rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) signed the last two of eight peace protocols that together make up an overall accord ending 21 years of war in the oil-producing south, witnesses said.

"The war in the south is over," Sudanese President Omar Hassan al-Bashir told a ceremony in the Kenyan town of Naivasha that was also attended by South African President Thabo Mbeki.

"Our happiness will not be complete unless we solve the problem of Darfur," Bashir added, referring to a separate and worsening war in the western region of Africa's biggest country.

Mediators said a ceremony had tentatively been set for Jan. 9 in Nairobi where both principal negotiators—SPLM leader John Garang and Sudanese First Vice President Ali Osman Mohamed Taha—are due to sign the eight deals agreed by their staff in two years of talks.

In the capital Khartoum, southern Sudanese thronged one of the main streets where a screen had been erected to show live televised pictures of the signing. Some held placards with the name of the SPLM, others chanted "New Sudan" or "John Garang."

"I am so happy with signing of peace. We expect Sudan will become better. Now, Sudanese have the right to live in any place they want inside Sudan," said Tom Okween, a 38-year-old hotel worker, who like many others had come to work in the capital. *Reuters*

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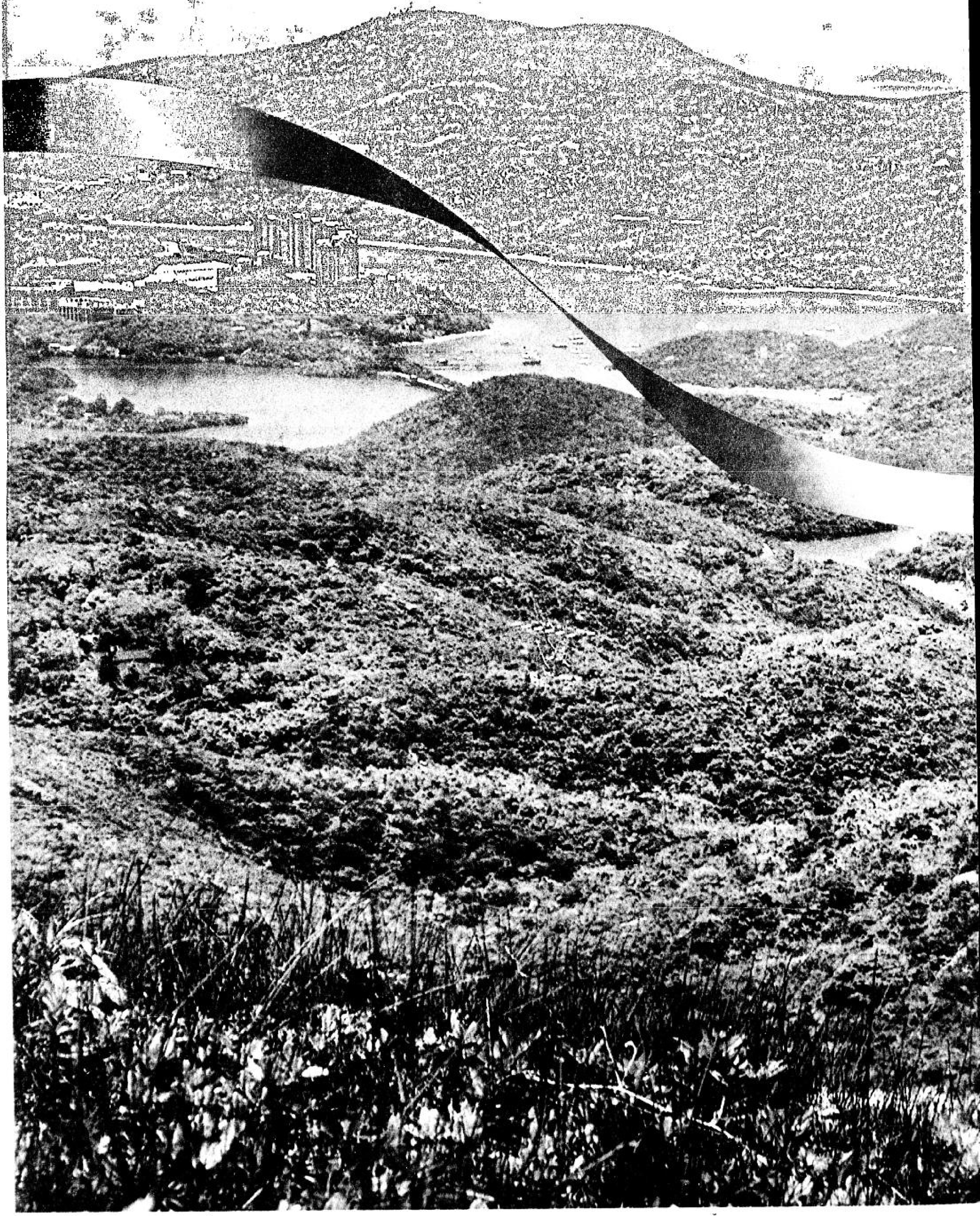

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OPINION

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Public interest

EDITORIAL

THE MANILA International Airport Authority (MIAA) took over the Naia Terminal 3, a few hours after getting approval from the Pasay City Regional Trial Court. It was time the government did it. The Supreme Court last year had declared null and void the contracts awarded by the government to the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) to build and operate the Naia Terminal 3. It ruled that the contract was disadvantageous to the government.

Though the idea of a Naia Terminal 3 was approved by President Ramos in 1995, the contract for the project was signed only on July 12, 1997. The initial target opening of the new terminal was 1998. During the time of President Estrada, the contract underwent two amendments, the second in September 2000. In November 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo annulled the Piatco contracts to build, manage and operate the Naia Terminal 3 for being "onerous."

The move of the government to expropriate the new airport terminal was greeted with relief and some (moderate) cheering. Ten of the country's biggest tourism industry associations expressed approval of the move. Business people also said it was a good move, but the government should pay the proper compensation.

Fraport, the German partner of the local consortium affected by the government's revocation of the contracts, is determined on getting its money back. It is demanding a minimum of $465 million for the still unfinished terminal.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza says his department "recognizes the right of Piatco to a just compensation and will (pay it) after a competent court has determined its real market value." He also said that a court-appointed commission will determine the just compensation for Piatco.

Public interest demands, first of all, that contracts which are disadvantageous to the government should be declared void, more so if they are tainted with irregularities. Such policy is basic and sensible. We are sure that if such contracts had been exposed in Germany or any other developed country, they would have been similarly revoked. And there cannot be two standards for multinational companies: one that requires them to be law-abiding at home; and another that upholds their acts abroad even if they violate the laws of their host countries.

Public interest also demands that the terminal, which to this day is a white elephant, be put into productive use, as an integral part of our transportation infrastructure. The government's move to cut the Gordian knot and work for the completion and eventually put the new terminal in operation is timely.

But where the government will get the money to do so, as well as to settle the claims of Fraport, is another story altogether.

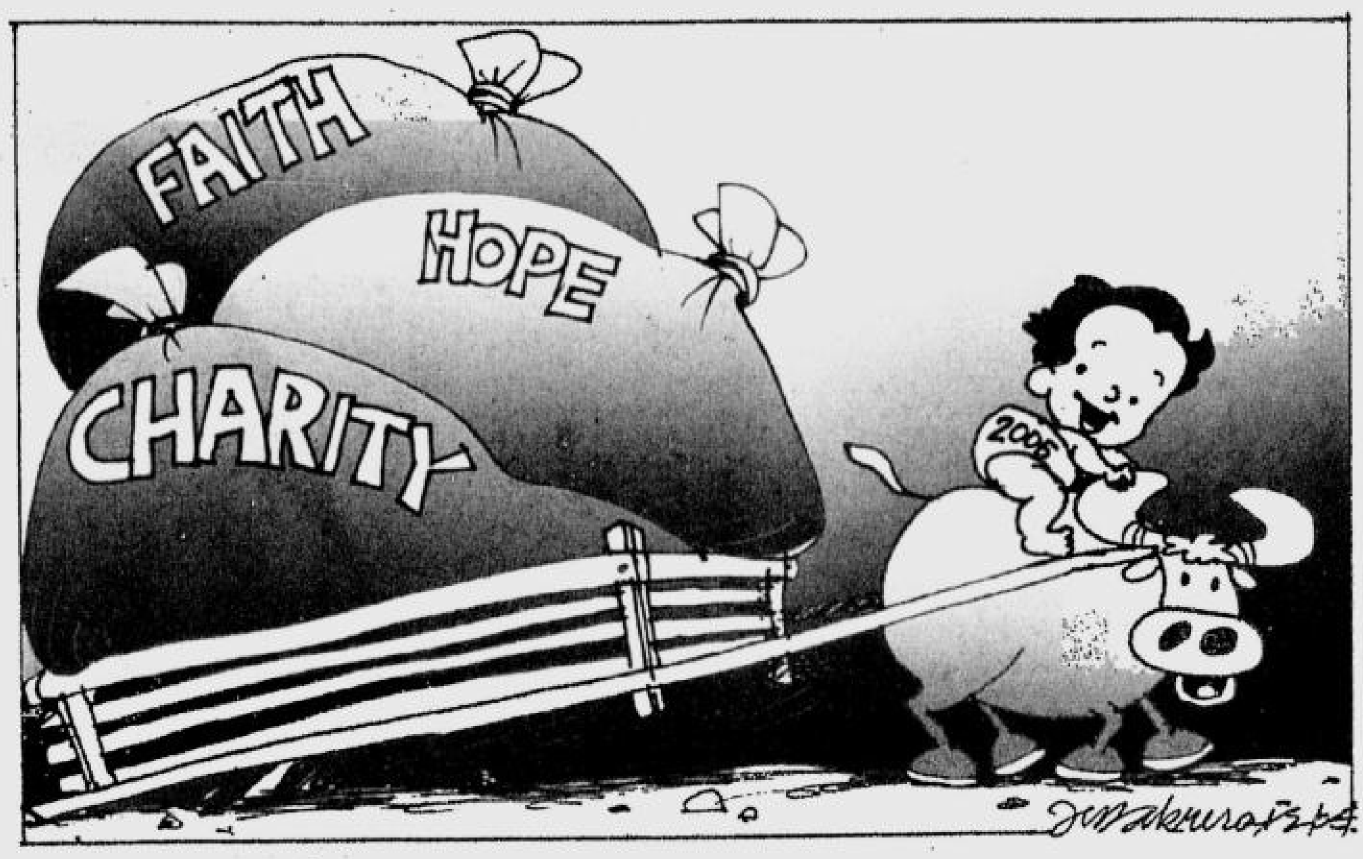
Foreign investors, beyond realizing that they cannot just bribe and cheat their way into getting contracts, should also find reassurance in the government's commitment to pay just compensation to those who have invested in good faith. The fact is, the terminal is virtually complete, and good money had already been spent for it. While the contracts are void, the fact is there already stands the airport facility, and those who spent for its construction should at least get back their money. The question facing the government now is: How much should it be?

The operative word is "just compensation." Neither Fraport nor its local partners should profit from the transaction, because they should not be rewarded for entering into manifestly unfair contracts. It would be meaningless to nullify the contracts, only to allow them to earn the illegitimate profits that the contracts meant to ensure and rake in.

The court-appointed panel has a golden opportunity to show that Filipino officials are capable of addressing claims without ignoring the requirements of justice. The country will undoubtedly suffer short-term difficulties for daring to teach foreign investors that they are welcome to invest but not to defraud the public. Our officials must show that once justice has been meted out, it will not be subverted in the name of accommodation.

The government, too, must show that it can safely and swiftly get the airport going. As it stands, the Naia Terminal 3 assails public sensibilities, just sitting there, affording travelers or prospective workers—who should be the first to benefit from its operation—nothing at all.

Filipinos deserve nothing less than the standards of justice that foreign companies routinely enjoy in their home countries.



The will to heal

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

AS we begin this brand-new 2005, I hope we will address ourselves to our many chronic problems and take more resolute efforts to solve them after the useless placebos we have been using all these years. We err in considering these illnesses as already part of our way of life. That is a defeatist attitude we must not indulge. Though serious and apparently hopeless, they may still be cured with competent attention and, of course, the will to heal.

Many of our current difficulties did not exist decades ago. We used to be one of the most prosperous nations in Asia before graft and corruption reduced us to the tail-end. We had the highest literacy rate before, with better knowledge of English than other Orientals, but not anymore. Peace and order was manageable even with the communist insurgency and without the bandit groups that now bedevil us. Adequate treatment was available in the old puericulture centers, unlike now where the poor have to pay for their medicines in government hospitals. And, yes, there were less misfits and nitwits among our elective officials.

In my opinion, the most urgent needs of our country today are the improvement of peace and order and the promotion of education. Attainment of these objectives will lead to the solution of other problems like the worsening national economy, the loss of popular confidence in the government, and the deterioration of the election process. Rights will be better enjoyed in a well-ordered society and talents can be fully exploited if they are wisely encouraged and developed.

One reason for the flight of foreign investors from our country is the criminality that has been plaguing us not only in the rural areas but also in the urban centers. It is bad enough that alien businessmen cannot venture in the undeveloped regions of our land (which they want to develop) but what is worse is that their lives are in danger even in Metro Manila. The trouble is that the law-enforcement officers, from those highly placed to the minor *kotong* cops, prey on the foreigner as milking cows. Even banks are regularly robbed in broad daylight and the culprits are often able to escape at will.

We can recover the virtues of that not-so-distant past and, as well, strengthen them with our native aptitudes and modern knowledge. Our children know much about the information technology and modern math (although perhaps not as much of literature and the arts and, surely, the Bible or the Koran). What the present generation needs most is the civic consciousness and political involvement of past generations of Filipinos that made them participate in the function of government and the solution of its problems. Development of such spirit in the younger citizens today will help much in coping with our present troubles.

An obvious flaw of our alleged democracy is the election of unfit officials by unfit voters. Candidates are more often than not chosen on the basis of money, guns, *pakikisama* and, most deceptive of all, the fatuous appeal of the popular entertainer. It is only during the past few years that mostly unqualified actors/actresses/basketball players/TV and radio announcers have presumptuously sought elective office and, worse, won over their better qualified rivals.

These pretenders are able to infiltrate the government because of the support of the *bakya* crowd, which consists of persons with little or no education and believe that a make-believe hero in the movies or an attractive singer on TV will be an ideal public officer. They were proved wrong when they elected Joseph Estrada to the highest office in our land but they did not learn their lesson. There are still brassy incompetents masquerading as public servants who pollute the public service by grace of their idiotic fans.

That vice can be corrected with the education of our electorate. They should be taught to resist the seduction of the entertainment world that, by and large, offers cheap and middling shows, toilet jokes, sexual promiscuity and immorality, ignorance and superstition, and adulation for make-believe actors who think that serving in the government is just another role for making more money at public expense. That unhealthy delusion is not in the script.

This mindless conviction of the voters can be resisted only by their proper education, particularly on their civic rights and responsibilities. Only education can release them from their infatuation with unqualified entertainers who up to now occupy and cheapen public offices. As Benjamin Franklin said, the best remedy against an unwise electorate is not to deprive them of their vote but to educate them on its proper uses.

We have many more problems to solve, but I believe that the improvement of peace and order and the promotion of education will go a long way in enhancing the future. Focusing on these two objectives will solve many of the other difficulties that continue to plague our confused country. We have so far failed dismally to deliver us from our moribund condition because of our ineffectual remedies. With the right direction and the will to heal, this New Year could be our redemption.

Our gifts for 2005

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

HAPPY New Year! We are one year older, yes, but according to a text message I received, we should not be afraid to grow older since old folks are worth a fortune: They have silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, and gas in their stomach!

* * *

Today, the feast of the Epiphany, brings to mind the Magi who traveled many miles searching for Jesus. They were guided by a star, and when they found Him, they did Him homage and offered their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. (Mt. 2, 1-12) They found Him. Why? Because they looked for Him. And allowed themselves to be led. We cannot find God unless we really look for Him, and open our hearts to His leadings. Where is He? He is just around. He is everywhere and in everyone. You can't miss Him. He is so big as to contain the whole universe, yet He is so small that He can dwell in a human heart.

* * *

What if the magi gave up their search because the trip was too long and too tiresome? What if they gave in to the wishes of King Herod to go back to Him after they had found the child? They could have landed perhaps Cabinet positions and lived comfortable lives after that. No, they chose the "road less traveled" because they were focused. They followed the star. They pursued their mission, and they encountered the savior. The New Year ushers in a beautiful opportunity for all of us to focus once again on what is important, and to start afresh and anew. It's time for us to renew our hearts and minds for whatever mission we have for the Lord and for Mama Mary.

* * *

By the way, the first day of the New Year is dedicated to Mary, the mother of God, and rightly so. Let us ask our Mama Mary to take care of us. She will be with us, come tsunamis, earthquakes, civil unrest, sickness, deprivations or whatever. Yes, Mama loves us. She who gave us a son, will give us all the help and inspiration we need to make our way back home.

* * *

What can we offer the Lord in this New Year? Let us offer the 4 H's, the 4 decisions for 2005. First, let us decide to be healthy. Let us live long so that we can serve the Lord long. Let us avoid all those things that make our body unhealthy. Why suffer sickness when we can prevent it? Of course, if sickness does come our way, in spite of everything, let us also accept it as our sharing in the Cross of Jesus.

* * *

Second, let us decide to be happy. In spite of trials and misfortunes, let us decide to see the bright side of life. Let us not be burdened by problems and by people who make our life unhappy. It's up to us. We can be happy, in spite of everything, if we decide so.

Third, let us decide to be holy. Once and for all. Let us decide to do good and avoid evil. Sin makes us unhappy. Why go on sinning? For a few moments of pleasure? For some empty years of fame and glory? Pleasure is fleeting. Power is not forever. Let us go back to God. Let God be God. Let us be humble. Without God, we can have no real peace. Without God, all our achievements are vain, empty and meaningless.

* * *

Fourth, let us decide to be helpful. It's so easy to be selfish. In fact, that is probably the easiest thing to do in this world. We can amass all the millions we want, all the pleasures we desire and all the comfort we long for; we can make people unhappy if we want to. We can manipulate and use people, we can cheat, we can lie, but, what for? If we did all these, we may be well off and comfortable in this life; but by doing so, we would have been untrue to ourselves and would have made our loved ones unhappy, and our God sad. And so, let us keep on trying, keep on believing that life is not about indulging, but giving. After all, isn't that what Christmas is all about—a God who gave, and gave, and continues to give?

* * *

Starting January, we will be on Studio 23 for a simple, prayerful Sunday TV Mass, which will be followed by a talk show that will have interesting guests to expound on the Sunday Gospel. We hope to go global soon, for after all, isn't the Epiphany all about the revelation of God to all nations and for all peoples? We hope that through this endeavor, we can "go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to all creation." (Mk. 16, 15) Please support us in this endeavor, our gift to the Lord, to our nation and to the world.

* * *

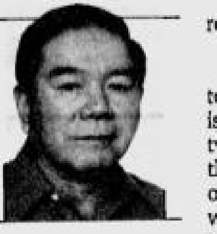
Advanced feast of the two kings! FPJ, the king is gone. If only we followed a star to lead us… wishing you all a better year, in all aspects, in Jesus' name. Amen!

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, accept our offering, our firm decision in the New Year to be healthy, happy, holy and helpful. Amen.

Endings are also beginnings



REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

AT BIRTH, Carlo Palanca Gutang was abandoned by his mother to the care of the sisters of the Heart of Mary Villa in Malabon. Two weeks later, he was adopted by Rudy Gutang and his wife, Ludy, who had been childless for some time. Rudy was my classmate at the Philippine Military Academy. In fact, he graduated as First Captain or Baron of our class in 1956 and went on to become the only member of Congress in our batch. But I remember him most as the fellow I had to carry on my shoulders—all 140 lb—while bobbing up and down to the beat of drums, a form of punishment imposed on plebes from time to time. Ludy was a schoolmate of my wife at the old St. Theresa's College Manila and who later became baptismal godmother to our youngest son Pancho.

Carlo was the second boy adopted by the Gutangs. The first was Marco, who was two years older. Both were raised in a happy home environment until a few years later when the parents separated. At age 14, Carlo's mother passed away and both boys went to live with their father. It was a difficult period of adjustment for everyone, perhaps, even more for Carlo, a kind and sensitive soul. He was the quiet type who tended to keep things to himself and found his situation a bit bewildering, to say the least.

He developed an interest in motor car racing and soon excelled in the sport, winning a good number of medals and trophies. One of his prized possessions was a souped-up Toyota Celica with his name and that of his navigator printed on the body of the car. He was also into badminton and some tennis, and in school, teachers considered him a good student provided he remained focused on his work. But as he grew older, he manifested a desire to know more about his roots, to fill in the blanks of his life particularly as it concerned his biological parents. In his search for answers, he began to realize the enormity of his solitude—a situation he was never able to fully comprehend—and gradually, a deep feeling of loneliness and despair must have enveloped him.

A few days ago, he borrowed a shotgun supposedly to scare off the cats and other stray animals from his Celica. At age 29, he would turn the weapon on himself.

On his casket was a racing car helmet and a short note from a friend: "I know the pain became too much for him. Death was his only hope for release from suffering. Life offered him no such promise, no relief. Let him rest now, Lord. Free from all that haunted him. Watch over him and be his comfort. Grant him the serenity that he longed for in life. Let his death be his healing. Amen."

* * *

It was a romance that started at the Ateneo and continued over a nine-year period, oftentimes kept together by postcards to bridge the distance which occasionally separated them. So it was in the form of postcards, beautifully designed by the bride, that Oliver Obias and Claire Mercado made known the details of their wedding which took place last Thursday, bringing to a happy ending a long-playing love story. Oliver is the youngest son of Yats and Olive Obias, old friends from our Jakarta days where Yats was technical director for Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, manufacturers of the wonder drug, Viagra. After 10 years in Indonesia, Yats moved on to a five-year posting in China. He is now home for good. Claire belongs to the Mercados of Biñan, Laguna and is a niece of noted interior designer Edith Oliveros.

As souvenirs for the wedding guests, Oliver and Claire came up with a recipe book "Dining with Two Families," a reflection of the couple's passion for good food. As Oliver put it, the book commits to recorded history the many family recipes of the Obias and Mercado clans.

* * *

In business, 50 years is a long time for partners to remain together. One could say that marriage is a business arrangement, a joint venture between two distinct personalities, each investing their time, their efforts in order to make a success of the union. Rudy Ecarma and Evelyn Cabili met when he was still a cadet at the Philippine Military Academy. Less than a year after his graduation, they were married in Manila on Dec. 29, 1954. Last week, the couple marked their Golden Wedding anniversary surrounded by family (five sons and 11 grandchildren), classmates from the PMA and STC Manila and friends. Former Iligan City mayor Camilo Cabili, brother of the bride, spoke for the family saying, "These days, people get married and are separated after a few years. It's nothing new. So when a couple stay together for 50 years, it is an achievement which says a lot of the love and affection between Rudy and Evelyn."

* * *

For me, 2004 was a landmark year. I turned 70 last August and spent the day with the folks who have mattered most in my life—Penny (the commander in chief), the kids and the grandchildren. We enjoyed a wonderful dinner at a small Brazilian restaurant on the outskirts of Chicago. Someone said, "Seventy is nothing. It's when you hit 75 that you begin to feel that age is creeping up on you." Maybe it's time to start writing a book before memory starts to fade. And I still am looking forward to my first hole-in-one on the golf course.

As we start another year, we continue to count our blessings and to thank the Almighty for keeping the nation safe from tsunamis. My own wish for all our readers is for a stress-free new year, and one way of achieving this is to forget all the grudges you have been carrying around during the past year. Nothing is more debilitating than trying to remember who are the people one should avoid.

Children saving themselves

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT was the title that first caught my eye. "Surviving the Odds: Finding Hope in Abused Children's Life Stories" seemed an oxymoron. "Hope" and "abuse" are two words you don't often see paired together, but I guess the two are linked by another word in the title: "surviving."

"Surviving the Odds" was part of a packet of books and publications produced by Save the Children UK (Philippines), an international nongovernment organization (Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom is a patron), in partnership with other organizations. The packet was sent to me just before Christmas by Rowena Cordero, the NGO's program director. Apparently, the publications are meant to establish strategies and approaches to the healing of Filipino children-survivors of abuse and trauma by using their own experiences and insights.

Violeta Villaroman-Bautista, head of the research team from the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, Psychosocial Trauma and Human Rights Program (UP CIDS-PST), says in her introduction that the project started as a study of the Filipino abused children's experience of resilience. "It explored the meaning of what could be a core concept in children's work. It was also basic in its secondary aim of looking for indigenous concepts and psychosocial methods related to helping abused children recover from their experience."

But it turns out the team learned much more than simply practical information from their work, looking into the children's capacity for resilience. As Bautista notes: "Beyond our research interest, our encounters with the children lend a quality to the work that left an indelible impression on all of us. We had the privilege of listening to children tell their stories of survival. These children were poor, some homeless, and many from dysfunctional families. Their wounds were deep, even cutting to their very spirits. At the same time, they demonstrated the unimaginable depth from where they drew their strength. As we heard them tell their stories, we felt, in some vicarious way, their experience and began to sense the quality of resilience possible at their precarious age."

* * *

WHILE we know too well the lifelong effects of abuse on children, the researchers note that "caregivers working with abused children report of children who transcend abuse and who cope creatively with their harrowing experiences."

In a study (1997) he conducted for Unicef among street children, Cornelio Banaag "encountered street children who surprisingly survived the numerous odds stacked against them. He found out that children can deal with their experience and carry on because they have the capacity for wellness and self-repair. His findings offer hope to the grim effects abuse brings to children."

"Battered and neglected children are not doomed by their experience," the book declares. In one chapter, the authors outline what they call "resilience themes," qualities and skills that resilient children exhibit, as gleaned from their own words and stories.

One of these is the ability to accept difficulties and adjust to the demands of difficult situations, what the team calls the skill to "roll with the punches." This is exemplified in the story of Gina, who led a relatively pampered life until, at age 14, she was raped by her father, found out she was pregnant, and then discovered that she had been adopted as a baby. Rebuffed by both her adoptive parents and biological family, Gina sought shelter in a home for street children and gave up her baby for adoption. Despite the abrupt shift in her fortunes, Gina was still full of hope, dreaming of earning a college degree and in the future introducing herself to her child and the child's adoptive parents.

* * *

SOME children also seem to possess from the start "life skills" that enable them to cope with whatever challenge they face—what the researchers call "competent functioning." Among the skills identified from the stories of such children are: intelligence and mental alertness, warmth and social skills, self-awareness and the ability to find new avenues for growth.

The capacity to learn from experience is another skill that serves abused children well. After falling under the "bad influence" of a teenage gang that pressured him into robbing his employer, "Jen-jen" learned his lessons the hard way. Caught and turned over to authorities who placed him in the Molave Youth Home, "Jen-jen" was transformed into a "model" resident, learning the dangers of succumbing to peer pressure and the need to find his own path in life.

"Children who do well in life despite difficulties draw from their inner resources when evaluating situations and finding solutions to their problems," notes the book. "They may have best friends, counselors, and teachers, but it is clear in their stories that they are in charge of their lives and they base their decisions on what they think is the most suitable solution, not what others think is the best solution to their problem."

* * *

"*PAGTITIIS*" or forbearance is another important "resilience theme." As the authors note: "*Pagtitiis* is not the kind of forbearance associated to a martyr, neither is it a lack of initiative to take control of one's life. It arises more out of a sensible evaluation of one's options in life, realizing that *pagtitiis* is the best option for the time being."

***Pagtitiis*, as the stories of different children illustrate, is seen merely as a strategy to gain needed time and space to devise ways to escape the situation they find themselves in. "Resilient children seem to take problems in stride and to respond to them with the least emotional expenditure as possible," the book says.**

There are other "resilience themes" discussed in the book, as well as suggested programs for tapping these qualities in children who need them most. More in the next column.

Fifteen reminders

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

WHEN one approaches retirement, the desire to communicate life's lessons to one's children tends to grow in proportion to their own increasing wish to be left alone to design their own lives. I suppose it is as it should be, for the problems our children will face are not necessarily going to be the same as the ones we faced and tried to solve in our time. We cannot preach to them; we can only whisper reminders to them.

Sometime ago, while feeling thoughtful and sentimental, I compiled a list of reminders that I would like my children to keep as they make their way through life. I intended them as a sequel to an earlier piece I wrote on virtues for a new world. (PDI, 9/10/00) They are things I wish someone had whispered to me when I was young. Here, on the advent of a new year, I would like to share them, for whatever they are worth, with the many young people who read this column.

I have gleaned many of these from my own experiences as well as from a lifelong engagement with philosophy and sociology. None of them is original; I am sure others have expressed them before in more eloquent ways.

In the light of the tragic events that have marked the closing days of the past year—the large-scale deaths caused by the recent killer tsunamis that swept Asia, and the landslides that hit Quezon, Aurora and Nueva Ecija—these reflections may seem inward-looking and uncaring, but it is only because they are focused on a different type of concerns. The quest for private perfection need not clash with the demands of social solidarity.

They may also seem unrepentantly secular insofar as they make no reference to the supernatural, but I like to think they are not at odds with the spiritual. Here they are:

1. Though our lives may be limited by circumstances not chosen by us, we nevertheless make choices all the time. Doing nothing, letting events dictate our lives, is also a choice. Be mindful of the choices you make. Do not abandon your actions; answer for them.

> They are things I wish someone had whispered to me when I was young

2. It is necessary to look after our selves. Try to look good always so you don't add to the world's gloominess. But do not forget that you also have a duty to live well with others. Give cheer, offer solidarity. Never be the cause of another person's humiliation.

3. Take care of your body, listen to its needs. It works in powerful ways, but it is not infinite in its capacities.

4. We each have our goals, big and small. Our goals are a mirror of our values. Always be conscious of what your goals are, and what it takes to achieve them. Do not hesitate to review and revise them by going back to the context that gave rise to them.

5. Living is essentially problem-solving. The solutions that work are often formulated from new ways of looking and describing. Observe how others look at life. Read and expand your moral vocabulary. Re-describe your life.

6. To understand a thing, science says, is to measure it against a standard. It is also to comprehend the context from which it sprang, and to know its uses. But remember: not everything is worth knowing.

7. Everyone has values. We acquire these in the course of our lives. Make sure your values serve you well; treat them as your "personal defense and necessity." Once you've settled on your values, live by them relentlessly.

8. The main purpose of living is to turn yourself into a beautiful and strong human being, a worthy link in the chain of generations. Each one of us is given a chance to be an artist: our selves are our first raw material.

9. Too often we become the slave of habit. Take time to pause and be silent, so that you can hear the voice of the inner self that may be struggling to free itself from mindless and debilitating routine.

10. There is no sure-fire formula for achieving anything. Armed with knowledge, you may also draw strength from having a lot of hope.

11. Live without resentment and guilt.

12. Love unconditionally and without expectation.

13. Be mindful of the world around you, and learn from Nature.

14. See clearly and act with grace.

15. Face each day with cheer.

Happy New Year!

* * *

Comments to davidinquirer@yahoo.com

Predictions galore

COMMENTARY

Raul J. Palabrica

IT'S the first week of the New Year, and I'm bracing myself for a man-made phenomenon that usually happens during this time: an avalanche of predictions on what's in store for us in the coming days.

Self-proclaimed seers, clairvoyants and other people who claim to have the ability to look into the future will soon flood the media with their forecasts of the important events in 2005. They will be invited to TV talk shows, interviewed on radio and featured in the newspapers.

Last year, a Hong Kong-based Chinese fortune teller even reserved a function room in a five-star hotel in Makati City and, for a fee, offered to hold one-on-one sessions with Filipinos who wanted to find out what lay ahead of them. The guest list of that enterprising Nostradamus read like a "who's who" of the Binondo and Greenhills business districts.

The fascination of many Filipinos for "crystal ball" activities may be attributed to either curiosity or gullibility. The unknown is always a favorite subject of discussion and speculation. In this exercise, one's opinion is as good as any others'. Only time can tell who said the right thing; however, by the time that opportunity comes, "who" said "what" earlier had been forgotten.

The saying, "There's a sucker born every minute," applies squarely to us. The publicity hype about the credentials and batting average of a seer (especially if he or she is a foreigner) seems to attract Filipinos who think they cannot meet the challenges of the future without knowing beforehand the arrangement of the planets and stars in the galaxies.

Calamities

Haven't you noticed that previous forecasts by Filipino soothsayers always involved natural calamities, such as typhoons, earthquakes or volcanic eruptions, hitting the country and causing widespread death and destruction? And when the disasters happen, they are quick to come out with I-told-you-so statements that are meant to boost their credibility.

The incidence of such phenomena in our country should not come as a surprise. They're to be expected. Our country lies within the so-called "Ring of Fire" in this part of the world and is therefore susceptible to strong earth movements and weather disturbances.

It does not require a Madam Auring, Jojo Acuin, or some showbiz-oriented crystal ball gazer, to forewarn us about those seasonal events. For all its obsolete equipment, the weather office has the competence and credibility to alert the public about those forces of nature—except, of course, earthquakes—way ahead of time.

So far, it has done well in that area despite its limitations in facilities.

Another favorite subject of prediction is the death of high-ranking government officials or movie personalities due to natural causes or acts of violence. Considering the stresses and risks that our public officials go through in the performance of their duties and responsibilities, the possibility of their succumbing to death at any time of the year is not far-fetched. Compared to their counterparts in the private sector, the odds of leading longer lives are stacked against them.

With regard to movie stars, it is common knowledge that they live a fast life. A combination of youthful exuberance, easy money, drugs and peer pressure can be fatal to the emotionally immature.

In both instances, it's simply a question of when the Grim Reaper will make its presence felt: this year or at some future date? And we don't need a loud-mouthed fortune teller to tell that to us.

Economic woes

The state of the country's economy seldom escapes the attention of our local soothsayers. The usual spiel is, times will be hard as prices will continue to rise while wages remain stagnant. Often, this warning is followed with the qualification "if the government fails to take the necessary measures" or words to that effect.

Very clever! Obviously, the economy will deteriorate if the government is remiss in its duty of maintaining fiscal discipline and providing the right atmosphere for the conduct of business in the country. The private sector can only do so much; it is the government that sets the course of our economy.

At the end of the year, whichever way the economy goes, the seer can claim confirmation of his forecast. If the situation goes bad, he can say he was right all along; if the economy improves, he can boast that the financial crisis did not happen because the government took the proper steps to avert it.

The same kind of "conditional prediction" is also used in describing the political scene. The line usually runs like this: politics will continue to hinder the country's development unless the politicians forgo their selfish ambitions and work for the common good.

Nobody can argue against the validity of this statement. It's plain and simple common sense. Too much politics is bad for the country's health. The fact that a fortune teller shares the same sentiment does not make it any more credible or worthy of stronger belief.

Caution

To catch the public's attention, some soothsayers exaggerate their predictions or put them in dramatic form. The more shocking, the better, especially if they involve famous personalities. And because these so-called prophets are a centavo a dozen in the market, they have to stand out from the pack if they want to be noticed by the public.

That recognition can be achieved only through publicity and what better way to get that exposure than to be talked or written about in the media. Mundane forecasts do not attract attention. For media outlets caught in tight ratings or readership contests, the statements of the seers should be nothing short of sensational.

Forecasts about the future should be treated like horoscopes: fun to read but should not be taken seriously. There was only one Nostradamus, and even then his predictions which have supposedly come true are being questioned: Were the events made to fit his forecasts or were his statements given stretched interpretations so they could apply to those events?

Come to think of it, if the local seers can really look into the future, then they should be able to know what lotto numbers will win or what stocks will make it big in the stock market. With that information, they would not have to solicit invitations—for a fee, of course—to TV talk shows that thrive on gossip and cheap thrills.

Happy New Year!

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TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to
jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

Are we ready for a tsunami?

TSUNAMI is from the Japanese words "tsu" (harbor) and "nami" (wave). It is caused by shallow-seated earthquakes occurring under the sea with magnitudes of at least 7 and with accompanying vertical displacement of the sea floor. The vertically moving sea floor pushes up the water column, producing a huge bulge on the surface of the sea, which, upon collapse, generates giant waves or tsunamis.

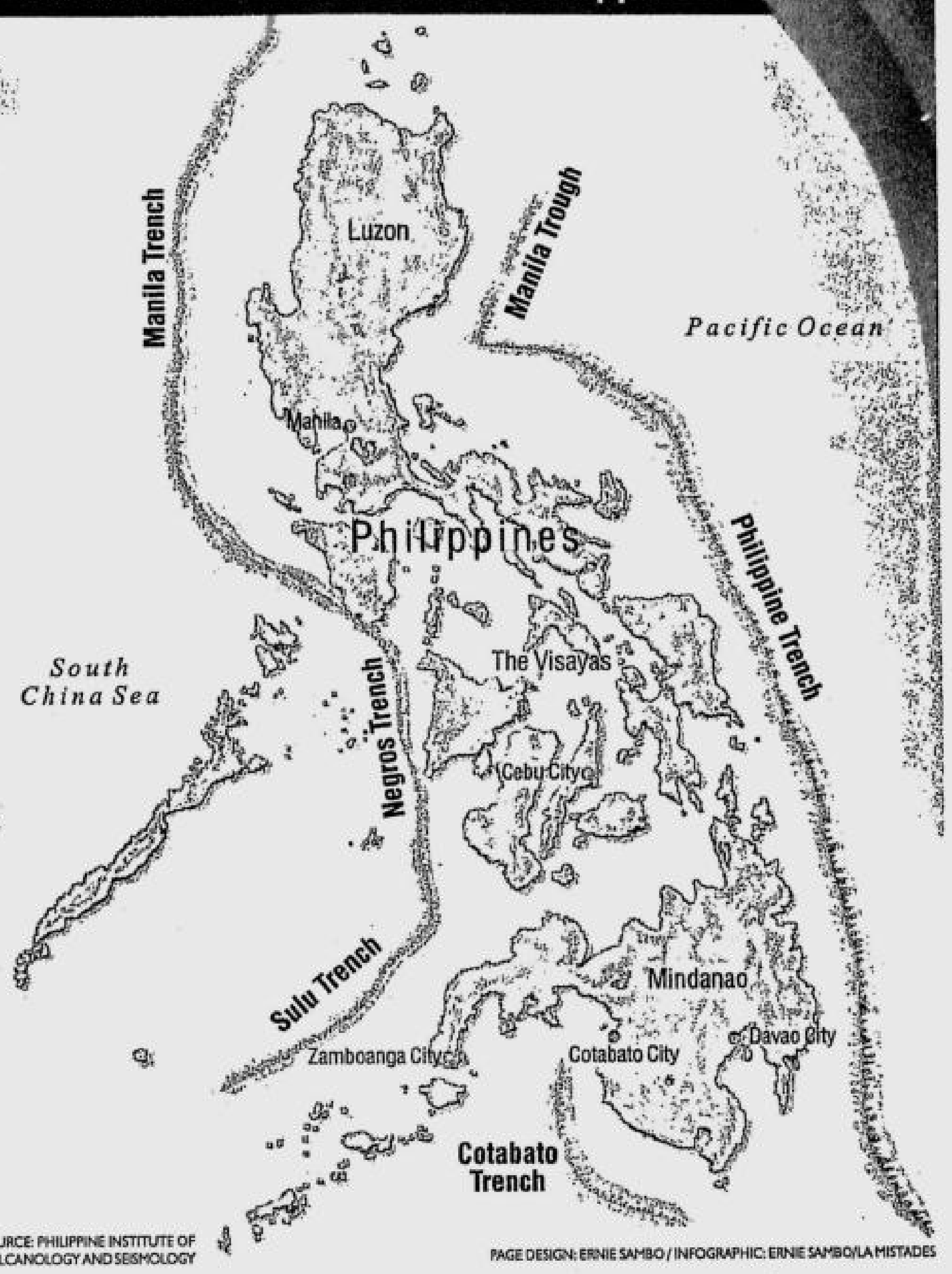
A tsunami consists of a series of waves arriving every 10 to 60 minutes. In coastal areas, the waves can be as high as 10 meters and can move up to 2 km inland.

Some 44 earthquakes had generated tsunamis in the country since 1856. A tsunami and a magnitude 7.8 earthquake, caused by the movement of the Cotabato Trench, hit Mindanao on Aug. 17, 1976, killing some 8,000 people.

Of the 796 tsunamis recorded from 1900 to 2001 in the Pacific Ocean, 117 caused casualties and damage, according to the Tsunami Laboratory in Novosibirsk. Of the total, 9 percent was generated in or near the Philippines.

The high death toll from the tsunamis triggered by a magnitude 9 earthquake off Sumatra on Dec. 26 showed that countries in South and Southeast Asia and on the eastern coast of Africa were ill-prepared for the killer waves.

Distribution of trenches in the Philippines



SOURCE: PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY

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Yes and no

By Raymundo Punongbayan

Is the country prepared for tsunamis? Yes and no. We have no warning system yet but the earth itself can warn us, and by this we can train our people. They should be properly informed and their reflexes conditioned.

There are many observable signs of an approaching tsunami. One of them is the sudden withdrawal of the tides and exposure of the sea floor.

The moment you see this happening, turn back from the sea and head for higher ground.

If it's nighttime and you can hardly see the shoreline, another indication is the rumbling sound that you could hear from afar, the sound traveling faster than the giant waves themselves. It's almost like the sound of a bowling ball rolling down the alley. With enough illumination from the night sky, you can also perceive the breaking waves because they appear white as they approach.

Without access to instruments, you should be able to tell if an earthquake you just experienced was enough to generate a tsunami. If the quake is strong enough to cause a standing person to lose his balance and get knocked down, that's likely an intensity 9 shaking and may have been generated by an onland earthquake or a tsunamigenic earthquake. Not being certain about the nature of the earthquake, the best thing to do under this situation is to turn around from the sea and seek high ground.

At present, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) relies on the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii for tsunamis that may be brought about by tsunamigenic earthquakes whose epicenters had been located outside the Philippine archipelago. These "foreign" tsunamis usually give us enough lead time (from 1 to 24 hours) to move away from the coastal areas.

"Local" tsunamis don't give us this luxury. The lead time will only be in terms of minutes (from 2 to 30). Philvolcs may be able to give us timely warnings if its seismic network can quickly locate the epicenter and determine the earthquake's magnitude. But this is not yet to be. By the time I retired and left the agency in 2002, its seismic network setup had been upgraded thanks to a Japanese grant. Phivolcs just has to improve its processes (within this setup) so that it can locate an earthquake's epicenter in just two minutes.

Because relocating towns or tourism facilities at risk cannot be done, authorities must let residents and business people know, understand and accept the risk of being located in tsunami-prone areas. They must be educated on what to do when there's an impending tsunami.

(Punongbayan is a former director of Phivolcs.)

Conduct drills

By Ma. Mylene Martinez-Villegas

The Philippines is bounded by earthquake generators (faults and trenches) on its east and west side. The areas most vulnerable to tsunamis are those along the coasts on the eastern and western part of the country.

There are two ways by which the Philippines may experience tsunamis. The first is if an earthquake occurs offshore, from any of the earthquake generators around the country, also called near-field tsunamis or locally generated tsunamis.

The second is if an earthquake occurs somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. It is called far-field tsunamis. The Moro Gulf Earthquake of Aug. 17, 1976 that killed more than 3,000 people and the Mindoro Earthquake of Nov. 15, 1994 that left 78 people dead are examples of tsunamigenic (tsunami-generating) earthquakes that occurred locally.

There have been earthquakes from as far as Chile (in 1960) that caused tsunamis to travel from the east Pacific Ocean to the west where the Philippines is located. Most of these tsunamis had more impact on the Pacific islands such as Hawaii. However, there is the possibility that a far-field tsunami is big enough to have a significant impact on the country.

Far-field tsunamis generated at any point in the Pacific Ocean may take 2 to 18 hours to travel before they reach the eastern coast of the Philippines. Based on records, tsunamis generated from the eastern side of the Pacific was hardly felt in the Philippines, except for an unusual rise in the height of the waves.

Some 44 earthquakes are known to have generated tsunamis in the country since 1856. Accounts from survivors indicate that locally generated tsunamis have shorter lead time, unlike those originating outside the country. After the main shock or intense ground shaking, there is only about 5 to 10 minutes (or even less) before the huge waves hit the shore.

Although the earthquake is detected, recorded and located by Phivolcs' seismic network, there may not be enough lead to relay tsunami warning to local governments and coastal communities.

Local tsunamis could occur even before a tsunami warning can be announced. One solution is vigilance and sustained community-level public education on tsunami awareness, preparedness and mitigation. Coastal communities must be aware of tsunami facts and be psyched up to react positively during an earthquake at any time. People and local leaders in the coastal areas must be aware of the basic things that they should know and do if they experience a very strong earthquake.

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(Martinez-Villegas is the chief science research specialist at the Geologic Disaster Awareness and Preparedness Division of Phivolcs.)

Warning system can save lives

By Sen. Richard J. Gordon

We are not quite ready for a tsunami similar to what recently hit our Asian neighbors. We might end up with the same or with worse casualties if we do not do something about it now.

In my 30 years as a volunteer of the Philippine National Red Cross, the key to all these is disaster preparedness. We never learn from the past, especially from our mistakes. We must not only learn but also prepare to survive disasters. We need a model for disaster preparedness that everyone should adopt.

We should be able to predict, prepare, plan and practice. At the outset, there must be an effective and efficient warning system of a forthcoming disaster as early as possible to give our people enough time to prepare.

There are 64 Phivolcs stations all over the country that relay and receive information from the Hawaii-based Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. Communities along the coastline prone to tsunamis must coordinate with their local Red Cross chapters and their Local Disaster Coordinating Councils in developing a protocol after detection to disseminate information to every family in the barangays. As soon as a warning is received, residents are advised to immediately seek higher ground. Installation of a 24-hour hotline and involvement of the media, particularly radio stations, are a must.

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Furthermore, there must be a Community-based Integrated Disaster Preparedness Plan in every locality. Risk-mapping and identifying elevated areas of at least 100 meters above sea level as evacuation centers must be done.

Familiarity is vital and practice makes perfect. Drills and training on the evacuation measures are a must within the barangays, the workplace and in schools. Escape routes must be reachable on foot within 15 minutes, whether day or night and during inclement weather.

Emergency kits or tote bags with all the needed supplies an equipment like flashlights, blankets, medicine and food during a disaster must be part of the Standard Operating Procedure. Additional training and education can be provided by the local Red Cross chapter.

When such measures are in place during a disaster, it will be easier to cope with it, mitigate the damage brought about by the disaster and engage in rescue operations when needed. However, if warnings are not heeded, disaster-preparedness, no matter how perfect, will be futile.

In addition, an Asia-Pacific Disaster Logistics Training and Reaction Center should be developed in Subic, which has a strategic freeport and logistics hub. This can be used as venue for our countrymen and our Asian neighbors to learn to survive disasters and form a tsunami alliance for our mutual benefit so that our people no longer become hapless victims of the fury of nature.

(Gordon is the chair of the Philippine National Red Cross.)

In the face of death that Tuesday

By Artemio Engracia Jr.

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"We didn't know what to do when the tremors started," a military personnel recounted. "It took us some time to escape into the open because the doors in our barracks were jammed. And when we finally got out, I saw the waves coming. I never saw anything like it before. It was somewhat reddish at the crest. I managed to hang on to a coconut tree and all of us were lucky to survive."

Elsewhere, however, people were not as lucky. There were thousands of them. Hundreds have been buried, others are still waiting to be claimed, and some may still be floating in the Moro Gulf or farther out in the Celebes Sea, from where the waves had come.

Death left its ugliest mark on three barrios of Pagadian City where over 400 bodies have been counted. And who knows what had happened to some 200 others who were reported missing after the waves struck a little past midnight.

The stench of death was what was left of the fishing villages of Sta. Lucia, Lacuran and San Pedro. Littering the shorelines were debris and what had once been parts of the barrio residents' dwellings. Bloated bodies of dead animals and rotting fish that had been washed inland made every living stomach turn.

At the Fatima funeral parlor, the bodies were lined up for identification, if at all that was possible. Some had decomposed beyond recognition. Workers were banging away with hammers and nails to turn up box-like coffins. But they never did catch up with the demand as corpses were brought in faster than they could make those boxes.

"How can a thing like this happen to us? What have we done to deserve this fate?" cried a fisherman who saw a family of seven disappear under the waves and never to be seen again. "I saw their house crumple under the waves and I never saw any member of that family again," he said.

Life went on at the Zamboanga del Sur teachers hall and gymnasium, which was converted into an evacuation center for some 5,000 homeless victims of the worst natural disaster in memory to hit the country. Tents sprouted like mushrooms outside the athletic field while most of the evacuees packed themselves like sardines under the shelter of the gymnasium.

Things were no different in several other towns along the hundreds of kilometers of coastline from Zamboanga City to Cotabato City. Everything living and green a few hundred meters from the sea seemed to have been wiped out as if a giant razor blade had shaved that long strip bald. What remained was the brown of the murky sea water and the mud.

Cotabato City was spared by the giant waves, but not by the killer quake, which leveled several concrete buildings to the ground. Over piles of debris, rescue workers used cranes, jackhammers and acetylene torches in a frantic race against time for the lives of those who were pinned down by slabs of cement.

"We rescued seven persons here," said Col. Delfin Castro of the Central Mindanao Command amid the rubble of the Sagittarius Hotel. "But we don't know how many others are still down there and I'm not sure if we'll be able to get them alive."

While relatives waited anxiously from afar, workers were busy trying to free the wife of the building owner.

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(This article, which appeared in the Aug. 20, 1976 issue of the Philippine Daily Express, was filed by Engracia, then a sports writer/editor, after seeing the devastation caused by a magnitude 7.8 earthquake and tsunami that hit Mindanao three days earlier. Engracia is now the news editor of the Inquirer.)

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TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to
jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

Are we ready for a tsunami?

TSUNAMI is from the Japanese words "tsu" (harbor) and "nami" (wave). It is caused by shallow-seated earthquakes occurring under the sea with magnitudes of at least 7 and with accompanying vertical displacement of the sea floor. The vertically moving sea floor pushes up the water column, producing a huge bulge on the surface of the sea, which, upon collapse, generates giant waves or tsunamis.

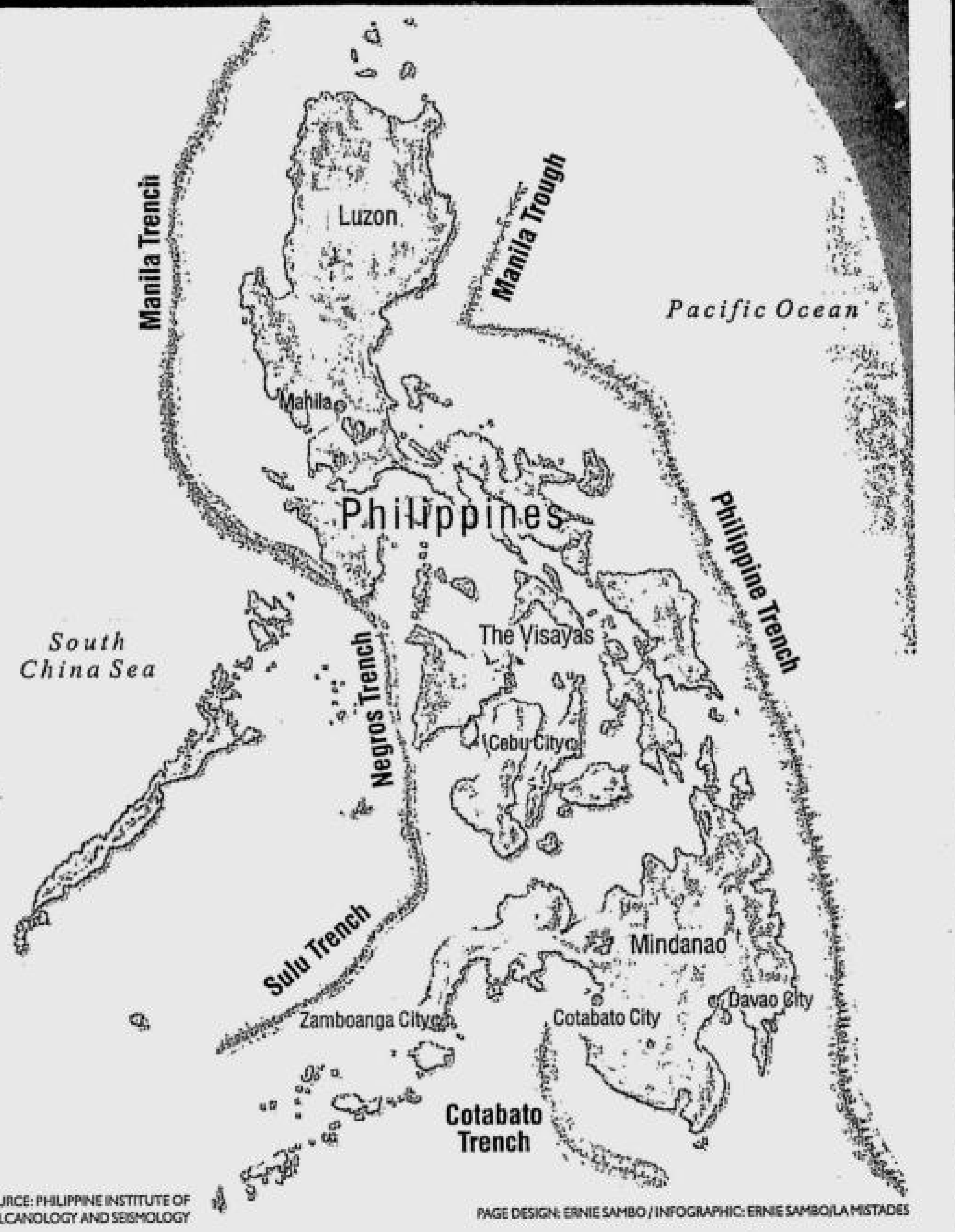
A tsunami consists of a series of waves arriving every 10 to 60 minutes. In coastal areas, the waves can be as high as 10 meters and can move up to 2 km inland.

Some 44 earthquakes had generated tsunamis in the country since 1856. A tsunami and a magnitude 7.8 earthquake, caused by the movement of the Cotabato Trench, hit Mindanao on Aug. 17, 1976, killing some 8,000 people.

Of the 796 tsunamis recorded from 1900 to 2001 in the Pacific Ocean, 117 caused casualties and damage, according to the Tsunami Laboratory in Novosibirsk. Of the total, 9 percent was generated in or near the Philippines.

The high death toll from the tsunamis triggered by a magnitude 9 earthquake off Sumatra on Dec. 26 showed that countries in South and Southeast Asia and on the eastern coast of Africa were ill-prepared for the killer waves.

Distribution of trenches in the Philippines



SOURCE: PHILIPPINE INSTITUTE OF VOLCANOLOGY AND SEISMOLOGY

PAGE DESIGN: ERNIE SAMBO / INFOGRAPHIC: ERNIE SAMBO/LA MISTADES

Yes and no

By Raymundo Punongbayan

Is the country prepared for tsunamis? Yes and no. We have no warning system yet but the earth itself can warn us, and by this we can train our people. They should be properly informed and their reflexes conditioned.

There are many observable signs of an approaching tsunami. One of them is the sudden withdrawal of the tides and exposure of the sea floor.

The moment you see this happening, turn back from the sea and head for higher ground.

If it's nighttime and you can hardly see the shoreline, another indication is the rumbling sound that you could hear from afar, the sound traveling faster than the giant waves themselves. It's almost like the sound of a bowling ball rolling down the alley. With enough illumination from the night sky, you can also perceive the breaking waves because they appear white as they approach.

Without access to instruments, you should be able to tell if an earthquake you just experienced was enough to generate a tsunami. If the quake is strong enough to cause a standing person to lose his balance and get knocked down, that's likely an intensity 9 shaking and may have been generated by an onland earthquake or a tsunamigenic earthquake. Not being certain about the nature of the earthquake, the best thing to do under this situation is to turn around from the sea and seek high ground.

At present, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) relies on the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center in Hawaii for tsunamis that may be brought about by tsunamigenic earthquakes whose epicenters had been located outside the Philippine archipelago. These "foreign" tsunamis usually give us enough lead time (from 1 to 24 hours) to move away from the coastal areas.

"Local" tsunamis don't give us this luxury. The lead time will only be in terms of minutes (from 2 to 30). Philvolcs may be able to give us timely warnings if its seismic network can quickly locate the epicenter and determine the earthquake's magnitude. But this is not yet to be. By the time I retired and left the agency in 2002, its seismic network setup had been upgraded thanks to a Japanese grant. Philvolcs just has to improve its processes (within this setup) so that it can locate an earthquake's epicenter in just two minutes.

Because relocating towns or tourism facilities at risk cannot be done, authorities must let residents and business people know, understand and accept the risk of being located in tsunami-prone areas. They must be educated on what to do when there's an impending tsunami.

(Punongbayan is a former director of Phivolcs.)

Conduct drills

By Ma. Mylene Martinez-Villegas

The Philippines is bounded by earthquake generators (faults and trenches) on its east and west side. The areas most vulnerable to tsunamis are those along the coasts on the eastern and western part of the country.

There are two ways by which the Philippines may experience tsunamis. The first is if an earthquake occurs offshore, from any of the earthquake generators around the country, also called near-field tsunamis or locally generated tsunamis.

The second is if an earthquake occurs somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. It is called far-field tsunamis. The Moro Gulf Earthquake of Aug. 17, 1976 that killed more than 3,000 people and the Mindoro Earthquake of Nov. 15, 1994 that left 78 people dead are examples of tsunamigenic (tsunami-generating) earthquakes that occurred locally.

There have been earthquakes from as far as Chile (in 1960) that caused tsunamis to travel from the east Pacific Ocean to the west where the Philippines is located. Most of these tsunamis had more impact on the Pacific islands such as Hawaii. However, there is the possibility that a far-field tsunami is big enough to have a significant impact on the country.

Far-field tsunamis generated at any point in the Pacific Ocean may take 2 to 18 hours to travel before they reach the eastern coast of the Philippines. Based on records, tsunamis generated from the eastern side of the Pacific was hardly felt in the Philippines, except for an unusual rise in the height of the waves.

Some 44 earthquakes are known to have generated tsunamis in the country since 1856. Accounts from survivors indicate that locally generated tsunamis have shorter lead time, unlike those originating outside the country. After the main shock or intense ground shaking, there is only about 5 to 10 minutes (or even less) before the huge waves hit the shore.

Although the earthquake is detected, recorded and located by Phivolcs' seismic network, there may not be enough lead to relay tsunami warning to local governments and coastal communities.

Local tsunamis could occur even before a tsunami warning can be announced. One solution is vigilance and sustained community-level public education on tsunami awareness, preparedness and mitigation. Coastal communities must be aware of tsunami facts and be psyched up to react positively during an earthquake at any time. People and local leaders in the coastal areas must be aware of the basic things that they should know and do if they experience a very strong earthquake.

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E-mail: inq_davao@inquirer.com.ph

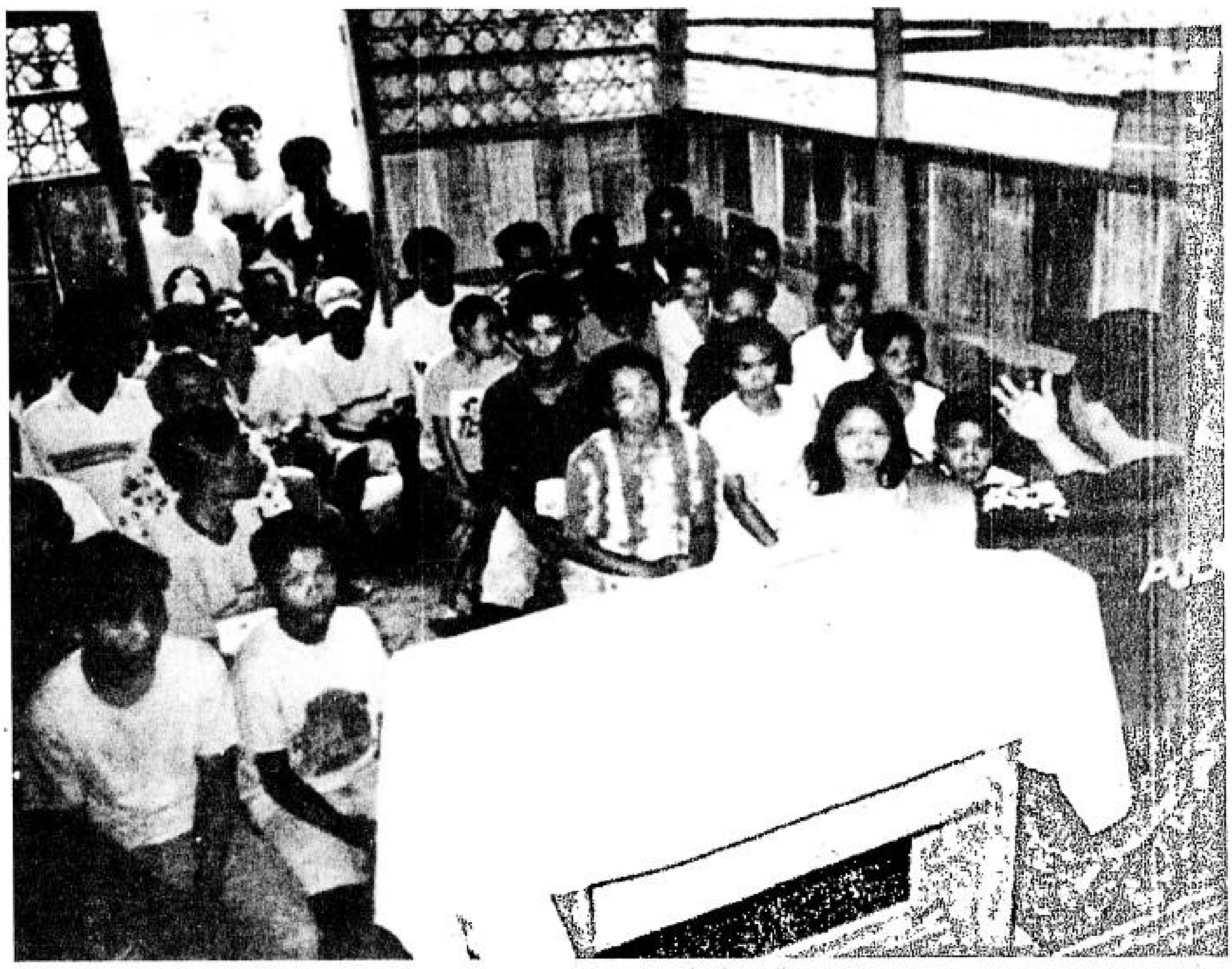
INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Nico A. Alconaba**

No mountain high enough for teacher

By Ferdinand O. Zuasola
Baganga, Davao Oriental

FOR 29-YEAR-OLD mobile teacher Mario Tubusan, climbing mountains for nearly 20 hours, with the aim to teach the highlander Mandaya natives how to read and write, is like an ascent to heaven.



ONE of the classes of mobile teacher Tubusan in the hinterlands populated by Mandaya tribesmen. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tubusan said the inability of his fellow natives to read and write has "pushed them deeper into the mountains," making them vulnerable to the influence of the communist rebels who have put up their own revolutionary government in several villages in the towns of Baganga, Cateel and Boston.

These natives recognize only the revolutionary government of the communist rebels as one could hardly see any trace of the government's presence in their villages.

In Barangay Mahan-ub where Tubusan was first assigned as a mobile teacher of the Department of Education's non-formal education program, the camp of the Philippine Army seems to be the only presence of the government.

But the natives said the presence of government soldiers in their village has alienated them further from the government as it resulted in frequent gun battles between government and rebel forces.

P700 per ride

Barangay Mahan-ub is some 40 kilometers away from the town center of Baganga, accessible only through passenger motorcycles called *"habal-habal"* which collect at least P700 from each of the passengers.

But when it rains, villagers have no choice but to trek for more than 15 hours from the poblacion where they sell their products and buy kerosene for their house lamps, sardines, medicines and rice.

Tubusan, whom the Department of Education sent to Barangay Mahan-ub in 1999, said the growing population of Mandaya lumad in the province who are illiterate prompted him to apply for the post.

NPA territory

Unlike many of the young and educated Mandaya natives, Tubusan opted to return to his hometown instead of finding work in urban centers.

But being a Mandaya did not give him the access pass to enter the rebel-controlled Barangay Mahan-ub. In fact, he said, his being a government-paid mobile teacher had hampered him from entering the village as he was suspected, both by the natives and communist rebels, of working for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"I was stopped by heavily armed men who introduced themselves as members of the New People's Army (NPA)," Tubusan said of his first trek to the village.

"I just prayed to God that they would not harm me. Fortunately, one of the civilian supporters of the NPA, who happened to be my former student in basic literacy education in the town proper, recognized me," he said.

That student was able to convince the rebels that Tubusan was there to teach.

But entering the village was not his only problem.

"At first, many villagers would refuse to enroll in my class precisely because it's a government program. They are overly critical of the government and its programs. They said all the government has done to them is to terrorize them with the deployment of government soldiers to their village," Tubusan said.

But after seeing that a number of their elders, who did not get a formal education, flaunting their newly acquired reading and writing skills, many villagers followed suit in the hope they, too, would soon be able to know how to read and write.

"Teaching my fellow natives how to read and write is a heaven for me especially when I see village officials starting to support the government's non-formal education program," he said.

Thanking sir

"*Gapasalamat ako kang Sir Maryo na itudluan kami kay sangawon wak katigam mobasa asta suwat. Tungod itudloan nan kami doun matigam da kami makaperma, di da ako maloko* (We are thankful to Sir Mario. Because of him, I can now read and write and make my own signature. I can no longer be fooled)," said 60-year-old Ileserio Silveron.

Baganga Mayor Gerry Morals said Tubusan was very enthusiastic and determined in implementing the government's basic literacy program.

"I was inspired by him so I gave my all-out support to the program," the mayor added.

An elderly resident said she can now go to urban centers like Mati and Davao City "because we are now literate."

"Before, we were afraid and ashamed to go to urban centers because the Cebuano-speaking people there would deride us for our being illiterate," she said.

"Sir Mario has totally changed our lives. He gave us hope and confidence. He proved us wrong when we asserted that old people, like us, no longer deserve to be taught on how to read and write because it is better given to the young. He told us that there's no age limit in education. I think that had we gotten this kind of education during our younger days, we would have lived a life that is far better off than today," another resident said.

Other assignments

Aside from the town of Baganga, Tubusan was also assigned in the towns of Caraga and Cateel serving 11 villages and teaching 392 Mandaya lumad, according to DepEd's records.

The DepEd's Bureau of Nonformal Education said there are only 300 nonformal education mobile teachers in the country.

Tubusan was adjudged as the Most Outstanding Mobile Teacher in the Philippines for 2004.

"As a mobile teacher, he has devoted his time and efforts for the eradication of illiteracy and alleviate poverty. Mr. Tubusan is a hard-working fellow with a remarkable dedication and exemplary commitment to serving the out-of-school-youth and adults living in far-flung, depressed communities through basic literacy programs," said Erlinda Kadon of the DepEd's nonformal education division.

"I told my learners that the government cares for them. And they should not lose hope because mobile teachers will continue to reach out to them however far their villages may be," Tubusan said.

> 'He told us that there's no age limit in education... Had we gotten this kind of education during our younger days, we would have lived a life... far better off...'

TUBUSAN and his students trek the mountains to reach the site where they hold classes. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ANOTHER of Tubusan's classes in the mountains. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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Legazpi City
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Fax No. (052) 820-1274
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Kidnapped Maguindanao doctor freed

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A doctor had been released by his kidnappers on Dec. 30.

Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, Armed Forces of the Philippines Southern Command chief, said no ransom was paid for the release of Dr. Alberio "Abel" Canda, resident public physician of Parang, Maguindanao.

Braganza said Canda was released about 9:30 p.m. on Dec. 30.

Canda had been abducted at the Parang District Hospital in Sulu last Nov. 20 by several armed men.

Reports reaching this city said that Canda literally walked home to freedom and passed by the 104th Army Brigade headquarters to inform authorities of his release.

Another version of the story from a local radio reporter in Jolo said the kidnapped victim revealed to his cousin Peter Canda that he was abandoned by his kidnappers somewhere in Indanan, Sulu.

Canda was also surprised to see several armed men waiting for him in the outskirts where he was left by his abductors.

He later found out that those armed men are soldiers. He was told by the soldiers to board a vehicle and he was brought to the Army brigade headquarters in Bus-bus, Sulu.

The reporter had complained that military officials are withholding any information on Canda's reported release, "because it would incur the ire of General Braganza" who apparently wanted to be the one to announce the doctor's release.

Brig. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, 104th Army Brigade commander, said the kidnappers of Canda had not issued any ransom demand and neither was ransom paid to the group that kidnapped the physician.

Dema-ala refused to reveal further any details on the kidnapping of Canda and the circumstances surrounding his release.

Braganza also refused to reveal more details on Canda's release but said he was planning to present Canda at the Southern Command headquarters before reporters during a press conference.

Cop becomes hero as he foils bus robbery

BOCAUE, Bulacan—A policeman played hero to some 50 passengers of a bus robbed by three men along the North Luzon Expressway in Marilao town on New Year's Eve.

PO2 Ronnie Alcala, also a passenger of the AC Transit Transport bus, fought back after one of the suspects, armed with a .38 cal. gun, shot passenger Madela Paz Aladaga, 37.

Alcala, 35, and assigned with the Special Action Force in Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig, Metro Manila, fired his 9 mm service gun, hitting two suspects in the head and in the chest, a radio report reaching the Central Luzon police headquarters in Pampanga said.

The third suspect jumped off the running bus, the report said.

Police said bus driver Jimmy Bacay drove the bus toward the Bocaue toll exit in Barangay Turo here where a police team was stationed.

One of the slain suspects, investigators said, carried an identification card of one Delfin Bardon, a bus conductor of the ERD Transport Corp. based in Cubao, Quezon City.

Police recovered six cellular phones, two wallets and P1,800 from the slain suspects.

Alcala, who worked as a back up security of Supt. Luisito Palmera, former Nueva Ecija police director, was on his way to his family's house in Guagua, Pampanga, when the bus was robbed.

Policemen said 13 of the passengers who showed up at the Bocaue police station clapped their hands to thank Alcala for protecting them.

In Pampanga, policemen led by SPO4 Victor San Antonio recovered 2-day-old Queen Paras from her abductor, Mariane de la Peña, 30, at 4 a.m. on Saturday.

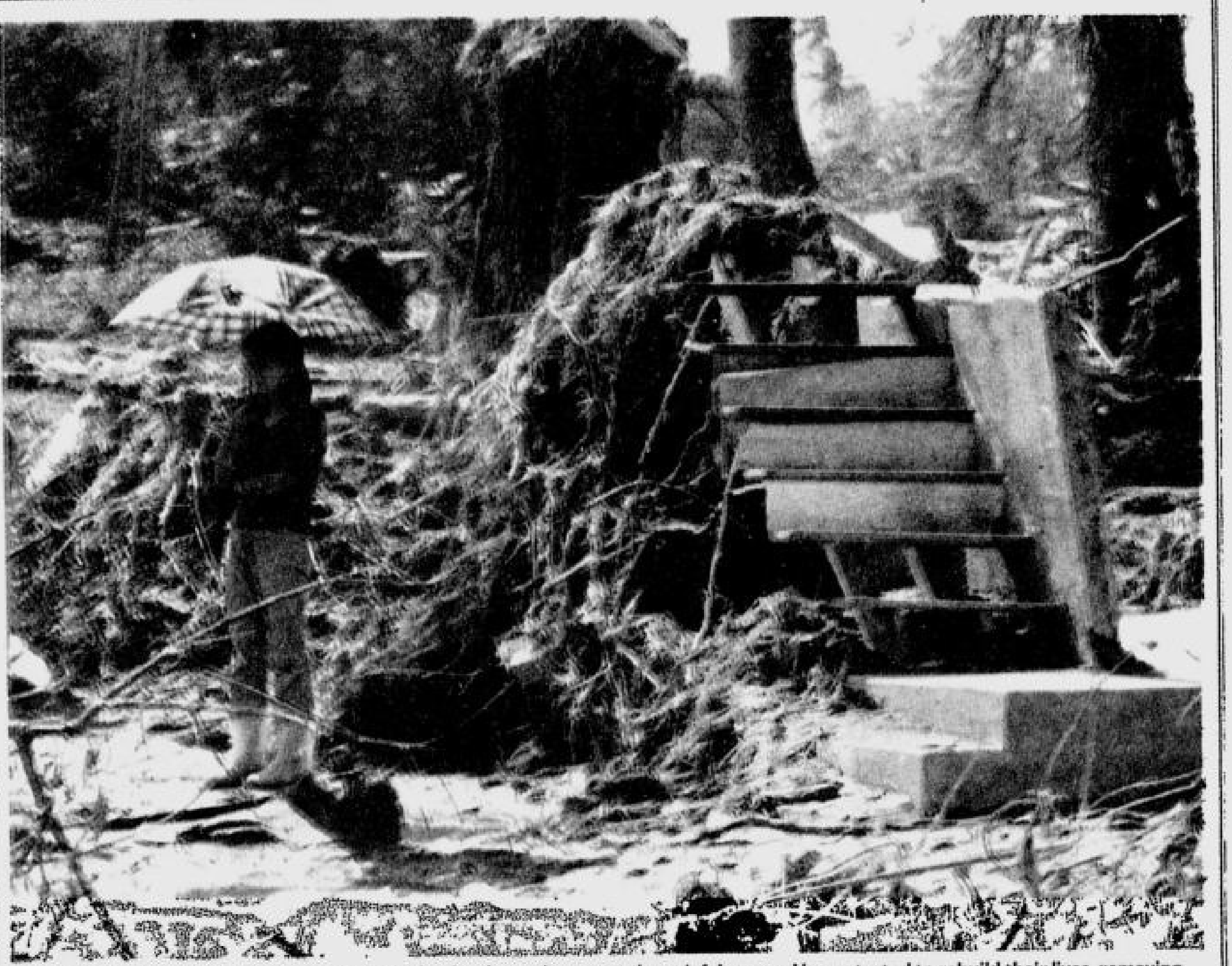
De la Peña, who sneaked into the Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital's pediatric ward, snatched the baby while her father was asleep.

In other reports, police found a couple dead at the Miyabe Court Hotel in the City of San Fernando at 1 p.m. on Friday.

Investigators said the couple died from shrapnel wounds from a grenade. Two live grenades were reportedly found near their bodies inside room 215 of the hotel.

A .22 cal. gun and bullets for a .45 cal. gun were also found in the room.

The woman was identified as Andrea Alonzo, 23, of Olongapo City. The police have yet to identify the man. *Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



PEOPLE of Quezon learned their lesson on caring for the environment the painful way and have started to rebuild their lives, removing logs that floods brought crashing into their homes.
PDI PHOTO

Ecija logging 'hotbed' learning new lessons

By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

GENERAL TINIO, Nueva Ecija—Keeping in mind the painful lessons that nature had taught residents of this town following the recent flash floods here, local officials have started tapping the help of residents and even suspected illegal loggers to save their forests.

"We are involving the suspected illegal loggers in this activity and the civic-spirited citizens of this town," Mayor Isidro Pajarillaga said.

"We have suffered enough in terms of destruction of property, infrastructure, crops, animals and a tarnished name," he said of his town, dubbed as the hotbed of illegal logging in Nueva Ecija.

At least 160 houses and about P30 million worth of crops were destroyed in this town because of the floods, he said.

Pajarillaga said 10,000 hectares of government land here have been set aside for a sanctuary for forest and fruit trees and wildlife and for the development of a botanical and butterfly garden.

The project, called the Centennial Sanctuary Project, is in the protected area of the Sierra Madre mountain range.

He said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the town government have signed a memorandum of agreement for the planned sanctuary.

Pajarillaga said the sanctuary would also serve as a source of livelihood for an estimated 2,000 residents of this town involved in "carabao logging," where illegally cut logs in the mountains are hauled down by carabaos and transported through the rivers.

Pajarillaga said residents involved in logging activities would be allowed to till the land within the sanctuary for crops and animal production.

At least 85 families are now engaged in fruit and forest tree seedlings production through a P500,000 seed money provided by the DENR, the mayor said.

Pajarillaga said about 1,000 officials and volunteers here participated in a tree-planting activity in the sanctuary in November.

He said local officials have been asking the national government and local and international funding agencies to support the project. A 20-km road from the poblacion (town center) to the project site has already been built, he said.

The tree seedlings produced in the sanctuary would be sold to other local government units, nongovernment organizations and other groups.

Pajarillaga said officials and residents here were disappointed about the decline of the town's reputation from an area once known as the "egg basket" of the country, for its *ikmo* (betel leaves) production, for its brass bands and its lush forests.

Now, he said, the town is always portrayed in media reports as a "hotbed of illegal logging."

This tag, though, has basis, Pajarillaga said.

The town's more than 55,000-hectare once lush forest is now denuded. Trouble also breaks out in the town because of "mob power" staged by those involved in carabao logging.

The mayor said in several instances in the past, men, women and even children armed with wooden clubs and stones in three barangays here and in the nearby Minalungao Park in Gapan City have prevented DENR personnel and Army soldiers from confiscating illegally cut logs.

Pajarillaga said their reports showed that these residents belong to families of people contracted by financiers to cut and haul logs from the Sierra Madre in Nueva Ecija and Bulacan.

Pajarillaga said officials of the police, military and the DENR and Gov. Tomas Joson III met with carabao loggers in June and gave them a deadline to stop their illegal activities.

To support their families, the government offered to give them assistance for seedling and crop production in agricultural lands under the government's agro-forestry project.

But Pajarillaga said despite repeated warnings, illegal logging activities in the town's mountain range continues, as shown by the logs that were washed down by the recent flash floods through the rivers along this town, Gapan City, and San Isidro and Cabiao towns.

5,000 board feet of logs from Mauban confiscated

LUCBAN, Quezon—Lucban Mayor Bonbon Villaseñor and Lucban policemen intercepted two trucks carrying over 5,000 board feet of undocumented narra square logs worth about P1 million.

They also arrested six persons, including the supposed owner of the logs, in Barangay Abang past midnight on Thursday.

In a report, while conducting a checkpoint at a junction going to Luisiana, Laguna and Sampaloc, Quezon, the team flagged down two Isuzu Forward six wheel trucks both without plate numbers that were loaded with narra squared logs.

Upon investigation, the forest products were found lacking the necessary papers.

Director Oscar Calderon, Calabarzon police chief, said members of the Lucban police led by its chief, Insp. Henry Ohagan, received information from a police asset that two trucks from Mauban town will be transporting illegally cut logs to Manila early morning Thursday.

Upon confirming the report, Ohagan asked the entire Quezon police to immediately set up several checkpoints in their area for the apprehension of the logs, Calderon said.

According to police, the confiscated items were allegedly owned by Enrique Amarillo, who was arrested along with one Nelson Remolona, both from Mauban, Quezon, while they were in a Hyundai van serving as escorts to the cargo trucks.

The police said the seized hot logs came from several illegal sawmills in Mauban.

During police interrogation, Amarillo allegedly admitted that the seized logs came from a sawmill in Barangay Bagumbayan in Mauban, Quezon.

Calderon said the arrested persons have already been charged with illegal logging and are now detained at the Lucban municipal police station.

He said they would turn over the logs to Environment Secretary Michael Defensor next week.

With the arrest, Calderon said he is hopeful that the police will finally bring an end to illegal logging.

He said he had already ordered police operations against suspected illegal loggers and sawmills in Quezon and the entire Calabarzon region.

"We don't want to be complacent with what we have done in recent weeks. We should not wait for another tragedy to happen before we act on this nagging problem," Calderon said as he promised to lead the raid on other illegal sawmills operating in the region.

The seizure was actually the second biggest police operation in the region in two weeks.

On Dec. 17, the special mobile group of the Batangas police intercepted four 10-wheel trucks containing 27,000 board feet of illegally cut coconut lumber and 400 sacks of pebbles from Mindoro Oriental in a checkpoint in Barangay Balagtas, Batangas City.

Senior Supt. Don Montenegro, Batangas police chief, said the pieces of lumber, worth P500,000, were released from the Batangas International Port shortly before the apprehension.

He said the drivers of the trucks, who are now detained at the police provincial office together with four truck helpers, failed to produce documents for the coconut lumber. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr. and Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Feud taking shape over patenting of flower festival

BAGUIO CITY—The man who helped build the nine-year-old Baguio Flower Festival called "Panagbenga," cautioned the city council against patenting the event that has attracted about six million foreign and domestic tourists to Baguio since 1995.

Lawyer Damaso Bangaoet Jr., a retired official of the Bases Conversion Development Authority, said he has the moral right to the festival because he conceived it in 1995, as former executive vice president, and eventually president, of the BCDA's defunct John Hay Poro Point Development Corp.

"I designed the festival to resuscitate Baguio tourism following the city's devastation in the July 1990 Luzon earthquake," he told the INQUIRER.

The city council asked the city government two weeks ago to immediately claim the rights to "Panagbenga," to preempt any official of the Baguio Flower Festival from producing the event in another area.

They were reacting to Bangaoet's resignation from a committee organizing the 10th Baguio Flower Festival for February 2005.

Immediately after quitting the committee formed by Mayor Braulio Yaranon, Bangaoet accepted consultancy chores from neighboring La Trinidad town in Benguet, which is producing the "Adivay" festival that will run simultaneously with "Panagbenga."

Councilor Erdolfo Balajadia, a former Baguio prosecutor, said "Panagbenga" power brokers like Bangaoet could simply suspend the project and transfer its venue to rival towns.

But Bangaoet told the INQUIRER that "Adivay" was designed to complement the Baguio festival.

"In the first place, Panagbenga relies on the resources and goodwill of its four neighboring Benguet towns which produce the flowers, vegetables and fruits that are marketed in Manila as Baguio products," he said.

Baguio gets its flowers from Barangay Bahong's rose gardens in La Trinidad, and the King Louis Farms in Tuba, Benguet.

The Panagbenga 2005 executive committee has proposed to introduce new cultural variations to the festival. One of the changes is a Children's Day event that will replace the street dancing competition for elementary school children.

Only the street dancing competition for high school and college students has been proposed for retention next year.

The committee has also proposed to reduce the presence of commercial advertising throughout the festival duration to restore "Panagbenga's" cultural relevance to Baguio, Kidlat Tahimik, a committee member, said.

Yaranon reduced the involvement of the council and the city government's department heads in the committee to ensure the independence of the "Panagbenga" festival.

Yaranon had criticized former Mayor Bernardo Vergara when the latter made the festival a government-led event for 2003 and 2004.

But none of these proposed changes forced Bangaoet to leave Yaranon's group.

"I simply quit because I couldn't stomach the interference of people who shouldn't even be involved in the festival. I was first approached by Yaranon to head the 2005 festival committee again and I accepted only on the condition that I had a final say in its organization," he said.

But Bangaoet admitted that he planned to produce similar festivals for Tuba and the towns of Itogon and Sablan, all Baguio neighbors who make up a proposed "metropolitan Baguio" project called BLIST (Baguio-La Trinidad-Itogon-Sablan-Tuba).

2005 starts with a bang in Palawan, capital city

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Despite the fiscal crisis, this city has managed to celebrate the New Year with a bang.

Both the city and the provincial government lit up the traditional fireworks display amounting to more or less a million pesos, according to sources who said these were donated by some friends of the local governments.

Before the stroke of midnight, there was a countdown for the coming year where bands led by reggae group Tropical Depression played at the newly built Capitol Park Square. It was followed by a colorful fireworks display that lasted for more or less 45 minutes.

The city government had another version of fireworks display at 1 a.m. near the city hall and in the coastal area.

The city decided to light the fireworks at 1 a.m. to give ample time to families to spend the opening of the year together.

The past year was an uphill battle for the provincial government against the national government to claim the rightful share in the Camago-Malampaya Natural Gas to Power Project.

Before the 2004 elections, President Macapagal-Arroyo gave P600 million, in two installments, to Palawan.

The first was on Dec. 8, 2003 and the second was on March 5, 2004.

The last one has not been remitted totally by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) but the government saw to it that all of the 432 barangays of the province got P100,000 each.

Many believed that the gesture was neither recognition nor development aid to Palawan but a campaign tool.

The petition for declaratory relief filed by the province to declare Palawan's ownership of Malampaya is still pending in court.

Elections, as usual, were exciting in Palawan, where the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. won in a landslide over Ms Arroyo, who had the backing then of administration candidates Gov. Joel Reyes and City Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

Administration candidates swept the positions in the province and the city.

Puerto Princesa, on the other hand, would not forget the biggest fire that engulfed three thickly-populated coastal barangays.

Three were killed and 10 were injured in the fire that razed around 600 houses on August 16.

The fire victims, mostly fishermen, spent Christmas and New Year in several relocation sites because they were no longer allowed to return to their previous homes.

The city government plans to convert the burned areas into a boulevard that would also serve as a tourist attraction.

Despite the total commercial log ban and its being the only province that has a strategic environmental plan, environmental degradation was still a main issue in 2004.

Non-government organizations called for a total mining ban in Palawan, lobbied for more fish sanctuaries and opposed the construction of a "world class" resort hotel in the tiny sandbar of Snake Island in Honda Bay in Puerto Princesa. *Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DSWD COUNSELING

Healing for trafficking victims sought

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The Department of Social Welfare and Development would provide psychological counseling to victims of human trafficking to allow them to heal completely before they start their lives anew.

"We want to make sure that the victims would be repatriated immediately. We want to give them a reasonable healing process to gain back their self-esteem so they could return to the mainstream," Soliman told reporters here.

She said they are working in three pilot cities—Zamboanga, Cebu and Manila—where they give healing services to victims who end up as prostitutes and mail-order-brides.

She said the healing services are given to victims of international and domestic trafficking.

Soliman said most human trafficking victims came from Bicol, Samar and Dagupan City. A DSWD surveillance team is closely monitoring Zamboanga City, which serves as a backdoor for international human trafficking, she said.

Soliman said victims, especially those who were dragged into prostitution, have low self-esteem.

"With the healing process, (they would become) whole again," Soliman said.

She said DSWD personnel are also undergoing orientation sessions with the Supreme Court justices and judges so they would be familiar with the anti-human trafficking law.

Children's rights advocates here wanted the government to impose heavier penalties on human traffickers.

The heavier penalty will benefit minors who are often victimized by trafficking, Wilfredo Awitan, campaign coordinator for Northern Luzon of End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (Ecpat), said.

Awitan, during the Northern Luzon leg of the People's Caravan Against Child Trafficking recently, said the illegal trade of children has become rampant on a global scale through the Internet.

"This is what we call the electronic online district, which is actually a network of pedophiles," he said.

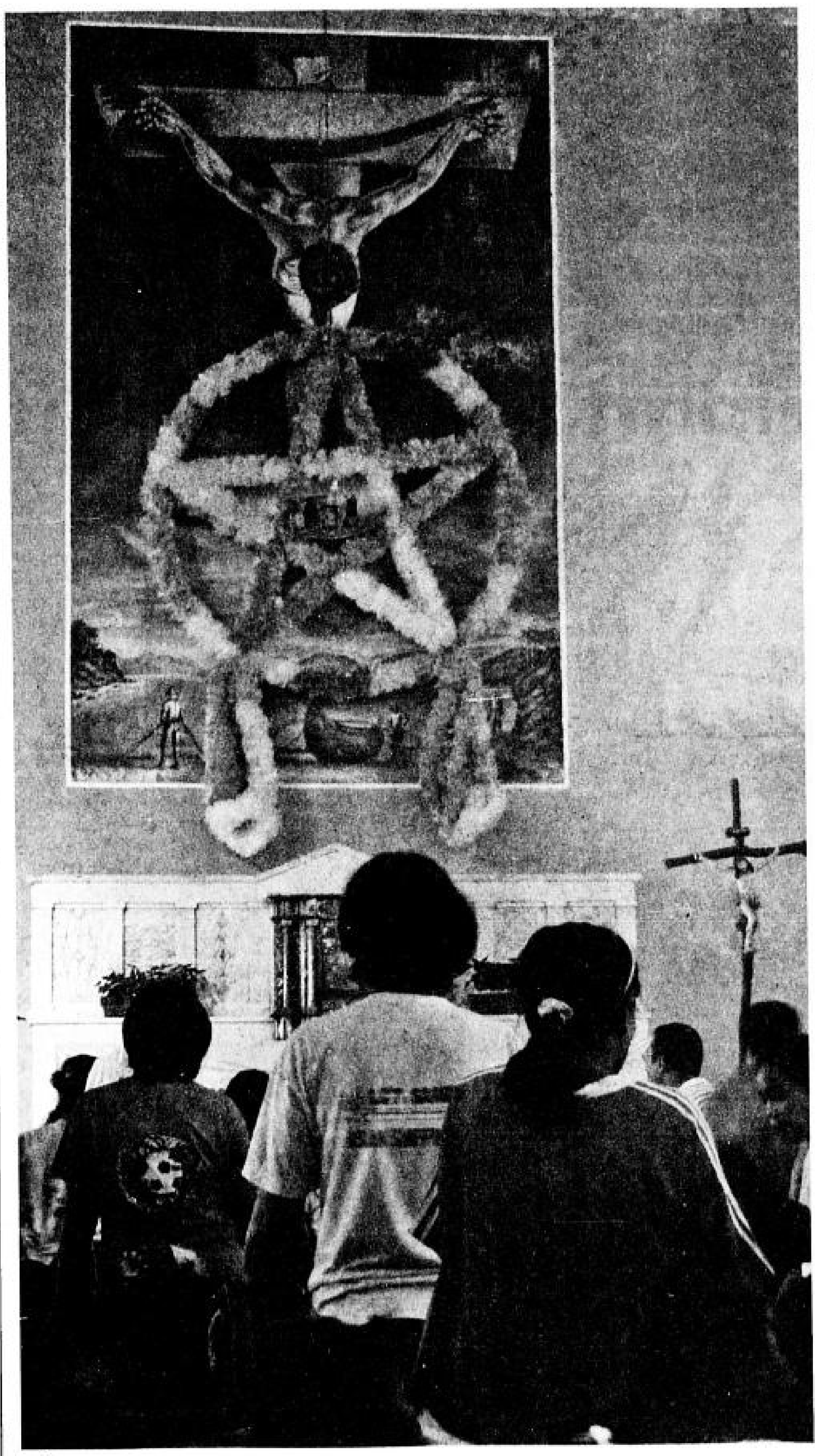
In Asia alone, at least a million children under 16 are prostituted, an Ecpat study showed.

"In the Philippines, situations manifest a prolific child sex industry which alarmingly victimizes a significant number of Filipino children who are trafficked for sexual purposes, prostituted or traded into pornography," an Ecpat fact sheet said.

Awitan said a stronger law must be passed because most child traffickers could avoid imprisonment by posting bail.

"Worse is right after posting bail, they return to their illegal activities," he said.

"Millions of people are trafficked each year around the world by syndicates and criminal groups. The largest number of victims of trafficking in persons comes from Asia," the Ecpat said.



Ren Zamora

KEEPING THE FAITH
Residents of Infanta, Quezon, a town still reeling from the devastation wrought by successive typhoons, keep the faith burning as they continue to flock to the St. Mark's Cathedral to hear Mass during the holidays.

Electricity restored in villages in Ifugao in time for GMA visit

LAMUT, Ifugao—Several villages in this town have been suffering from a power outage since Dec. 3 when Typhoon Yoyong damaged power lines here. But it took a visit from President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday to have their power supply back.

Personnel of the Ifugao Electric Cooperative worked for a day to fully restore power in the town when they learned that the President would pay a visit.

Ms Arroyo, in her opening statement during a press forum at the town hall, praised Ifelco officials for their efficiency in restoring electricity to several villages here.

"When I was preparing to come here, I found out that one of the problems of Lamut, aside from the 100 families who lost their homes, was power. But just in time for our arrival here, Ifelco worked for 24 hours. Now all barangays of Lamut have power," Ms Arroyo said.

A local government employee said the town's communications and power facilities were damaged by the recent typhoon.

Ms Arroyo said she already instructed Energy Secretary Vicente Perez to prioritize Ifugao in the government's electrification program.

"As you know, (during) my inaugural address, (I said) I would bring (electricity) to all barangays in the country. There are 3,900 barangays left for electrification. We have been electrifying a lot (of villages) since (I took office in June)," she said.

An Ifelco official said only 10 of 175 villages in Ifugao are left without electricity.

Ms Arroyo distributed relief goods, rice seedlings and a check worth P800,000 to 32 families who were worst hit by the typhoon in Lamut. She also distributed land titles and a P1-million check for the restoration of electricity in the typhoon-affected villages.

Ifugao Board Member Nora Dinamling, chair of the provincial board's committee on social services, said several rice terraces in the towns of Hungduan, Mayoyao and Aguinaldo were eroded because of the typhoon.

Several roads in Tinoc town and other remote Ifugao villages remain impassable, she said.

Ms Arroyo said she also ordered officials of the Department of Agriculture to create new jobs by opening more lands for agri-business.

She said the preservation of the Ifugao terraces remained as one of the priority projects of her administration. The terraces are among the World Heritage Sites recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco).

Ms Arroyo said if the government budget would allow it, they would establish a communications facility in Ifugao to monitor the status of the rice terraces.

Asked about her New Year's wish, Ms Arroyo said she wants to "put our fiscal house in order" and to stamp out graft and corruption.

When pressed by a television reporter about her New Year's resolution, the President said: "Every year, my resolution is to keep my temper (under control)."

Ms Arroyo's statements were interrupted by laughter from government officials and reporters attending the event.

Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman, who accompanied the President here, said Ms Arroyo has been successful in this aspect.

"And she's succeeding, she's succeeding, if I may say so," said Soliman. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Gloria visits Isabela to chants of 'FPJ, FPJ'

ILAGAN, Isabela—President Macapagal-Arroyo did not escape hecklers who chanted the initials of the late movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. as she visited this capital town of Isabela on Wednesday.

Some residents along the main road in the town center chanted "FPJ! FPJ!" as the President's convoy passed through the town.

Ms Arroyo defeated Poe in the May 10 elections but Isabela voters rooted for Poe, who won by at least 150,000 votes over Ms Arroyo in the province.

Ms Arroyo visited Isabela to distribute calamity assistance to areas affected by recent typhoons.

At least 85 of 91 low-lying villages in Ilagan were flooded during the onslaught of Typhoon Yoyong here. Reports said 275 villages in Isabela were flooded during that typhoon.

The President, who came from Baguio City where she spent her Christmas and New Year holidays, distributed P1 million each to the provincial government of Isabela, the city government of Cauayan and the municipal government of Ilagan.

The provincial government earlier received at least P2.6 million in relief assistance from the national government.

But the President's visit in Barangay San Vicente here created a minor disruption after a member of the Presidential Security Group dragged resident Josefina Macapagal (no relation to the President) away from Ms Arroyo.

Macapagal, a widow, kissed and hugged the President and was trying to ask Ms Arroyo to help her two unemployed children find permanent jobs when a PSG member dragged her.

Ms Arroyo later instructed a staff member to approach Macapagal and get her request. The staff member told her that Ms Arroyo would help her.

Ms Arroyo and Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman distributed relief packs to about 2,000 families here.

The President also distributed land titles, seeds and fertilizers to typhoon-affected farmers.

After the ceremonies, she greeted the villagers and shook their hands.

In Cauayan City, the President cited the importance of the mining industry as one of the solutions to the fiscal crisis.

Promising to fully erase the "culture of graft and corruption" before her term ends in 2010, Ms Arroyo said she would prioritize transparency in government transactions. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Campaign for 'optional celibacy' launched

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Three controversial Iloilo priests who openly acknowledged siring children launched a movement calling for optional celibacy for the clergy in the Roman Catholic Church.

Fathers Hector Canto, Jesus Siva and Elmer Cajilig said the movement is a "potent force that will show to the Church hierarchy" that there are communities that are "very supportive" of married priests or priests who want to build families.

The priests were joined by Canto's wife Cynthia Diamante and around 100 supporters during the launching of the Katilingban nga Nagatib-ong sang Pari kag sang iya Pamilya kag Kinamatarung sang Tawo Inc. (Kapilya) at the plaza of Zone 3 in Barangay Boulevard in Molo District here.

The priests celebrated Mass, officiated the wedding of two couples and also performed baptismal rites.

"Kapilya is a movement within the Church seeking for renewal for a transparent and honest priesthood," Siva told the INQUIRER.

A major objective of the groups is to gather a million signatures for an open letter to be sent to the Vatican asking the Church "to allow priests who have no gift of celibacy to marry."

Siva said the movement would help popularize their call for optional celibacy for the clergy. They also want to encourage priests with families to surface "because there are communities that will support them."

"Don't be afraid. The movement is here to support you and we shall overcome," Siva called on his fellow priests who have children or who want to have families.

Siva said the organization also plans to engage in livelihood programs to provide for the needs of the children and partners of priests.

Siva said they timed the launching of the movement with the Feast of the Holy Innocents to call on the Church to allow priests who have children to live with their children and partners "as husband and wife."

"In doing so, children (of priests) will be dignified and unborn children will be saved from abortion," the three priests said in a statement.

The venue of the launching was also symbolic. Siva said the partners and children of at least six priests assigned to dioceses on Panay Island have been staying in the area to hide from the public. The Molo shoreline is host to urban poor communities coming from the rural areas who are mostly transient residents.

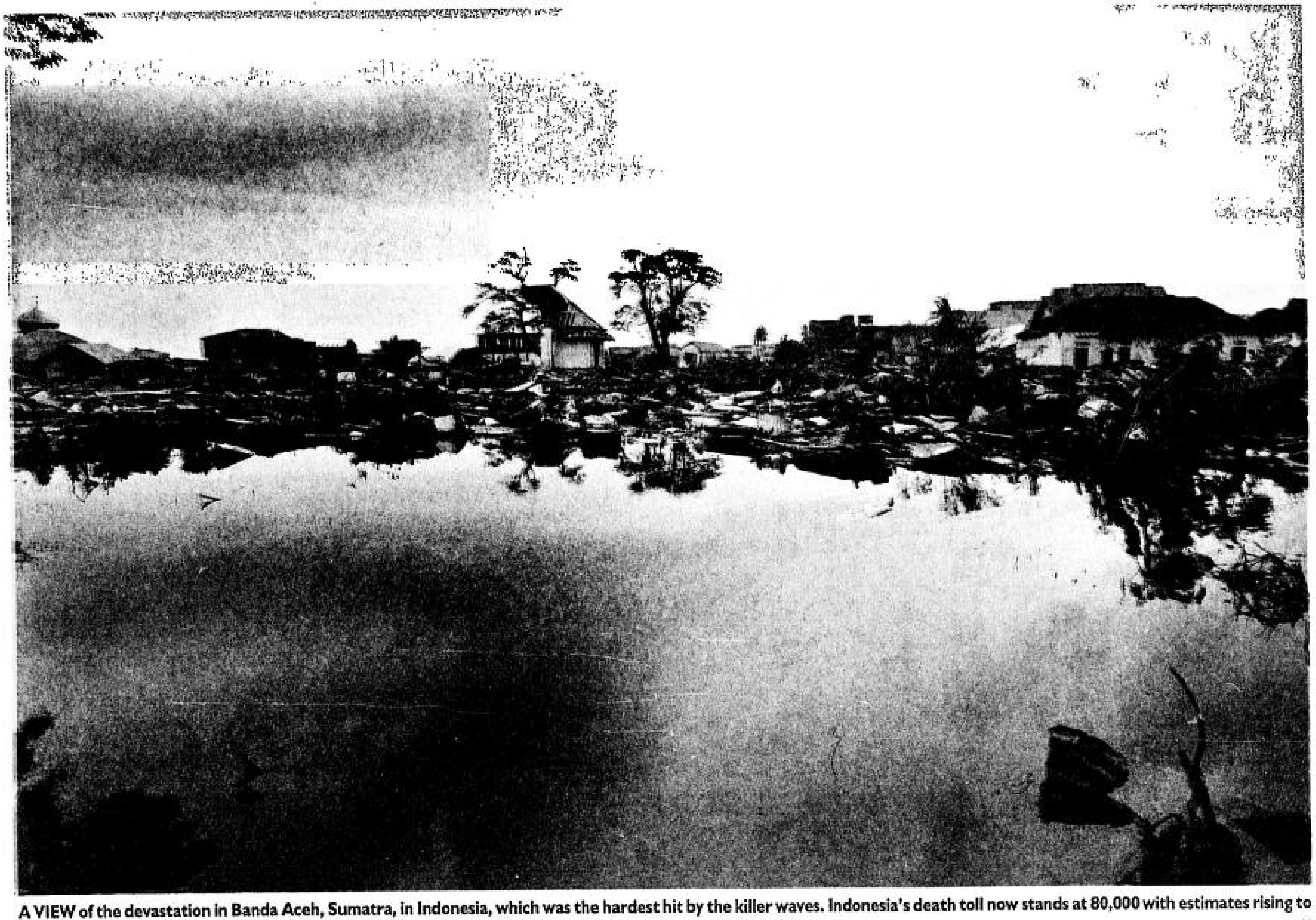
Kapilya was registered on Dec. 8 with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). The incorporators include the three priests and six lay people.

Siva said they would put up chapters in communities that are supportive of their cause.

Despite objections from Church officials, Siva officiated the highly celebrated marriage of Canto and Diamante on May 31, 1998 at the Mt. Zion chapel in Barangay Balagiao, Lambunao town, 48 km north of this city.

In June 1999, Church officials revoked the two priests' license to solemnize marriages. Since then they have not received assignments and remain suspended as both priests have continuously stood by their cause.

Canto and Diamante have two children, aged 6 and 4, while Siva has two sons aged 4 and 2 with his common-law wife Bema Rita Diesto.



A VIEW of the devastation in Banda Aceh, Sumatra, in Indonesia, which was the hardest hit by the killer waves. Indonesia's death toll now stands at 80,000 with estimates rising to 100,000. AP

2 more ...

From page A1

Those in the previous list of the missing were Alexander Latoza, Alma Gillado, Marcial Ferre, Sheryn Tan, Cruzette Bulaon Cruz, Marcela S. Albao, Jasmin Barandoc, Gerard S. Reyes, Jovita Gomez (aka Wijitra Charoenpong), Ava Angelica Alora, Dario Banua Maniago, Eliza Ferguzon, Gloria Bauarle, Remedios Rico Daniel and Josie Co.

Asuque said that, except for five, the listed addresses in Thailand of those missing were within the disaster areas.

More survivors

The five with listed addresses outside the affected areas were Villanueva, Ocampo, Faustina, Gomez and Co but they could not be found at those addresses, either, Asuque added.

Four other new names were added to the list of survivors: Rolando Lagao, Florante Encarnacion, Allan Ortega and Lea Reyes.

Those earlier identified as having survived the calamity were Charlie Caringal, Jean Caringal, Marlena Baardsen, Jenny Rose Bagoyo, Mary Ann Bagoyo, Theresa Joy Roxas, Novie Navarette, Rachel Escoton, Darryl Gay S. Juarez, Alvin H. Bay, sisters Catherine and Pilar Prieto, Marco Sangil, Virginia Cruz, Roselyn Carpio Asuncion, Beverly Tan, Celeste Panahon, Cherry Panahon, Erwin Raagas, Jovito Masaga, Lorena M. Burlaza, Margaret Ang-Choi, Rosemarie Phi King Tan, mother of one of the fatalities; Joselito Balbutin, Jerwin Sedillo, Flordeliza (Dianne) Isla and Reginaldo Recibio.

Elephants join relief drive to speed up delivery of aid

From page A1

workers retrieve and transport bloated bodies from beaches and islands.

About 24 elephants were to land on the devastated resort island of Phuket and the mainland beaches of Khao Lak where rotting corpses lay buried beneath rubble.

Elephants better

"Elephants are better than four-wheel-drive trucks, better than backhoes. Those can't go far, but elephants can," owner Sompast Meephan said.

The emergency relief operation, probably the biggest in history, was up against debris-clogged harbors, power outages, washed-away roads and shattered towns in a race to save millions from dehydration and disease and halt a spiralling death toll.

"The vast majority of those are in Indonesia and Aceh, which is the least assessed area because of logistical constraints, and (the toll) may therefore rise further," said UN emergency relief coordinator Jan Egeland.

Logistical nightmare

Swedish Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds had said the toll could hit 200,000.

The catastrophe has left millions without even the basics to survive. Aid workers strained to dislodge corpses and dead animals from drainpipes and wells in an attempt to restore clean water supplies. Aid groups fear that without clean water, the spread of disease could double the death toll.

As trucks laden with food, medicines and body bags rolled across Asia, and aircraft dropped supplies to cut-off villages, some airports in the region were barely coping.

Giant transport planes from Australia and Singapore landed at Banda Aceh, capital of Aceh, and disgorged emergency supplies, but that was the easy part.

Sending help from regional centers to people cut off in coastal lands was a logistical nightmare, as troops, aid groups and governments struggled to coordinate their efforts.

Annan's appeal

"We are going to need major logistical support to airplanes, helicopters and air controllers to assist us (to) move the produce and the goods as quickly as possible so that we don't have bottlenecks," Annan said after his meeting with Powell at the United Nations.

Amid press reports about a rivalry between the UN and the United States over who would take the lead role in the relief campaign, both men said that the world body was leading the effort.

Annan underlined "the need for us to cooperate and coordinate our efforts as effectively as possible."

The White House suggested US assistance could rise still higher after a delegation headed by Powell and the president's brother, Florida Gov. Jeb Bush, tours devastated areas next week and reports back to the president on the needs of an estimated 5 million tsunami survivors.

Biggest donor

The $350 million sum far outstripped relief contributions from any other country until Japan made its pledge of $500 million. Previously, the biggest donors had been Britain with $96 million and Sweden with $80 million.

The Asian Development Bank earmarked an initial $325 million for Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Indonesian Vice President Jusuf Kalla said in Banda Aceh that relief efforts were improving but that there was a shortage of drivers.

"There are no drivers at all," he said.

Frustrated aid workers

Many aid workers said they were growing impatient.

Orthopedic surgeon Peter Sharwood said he had flown for 15 hours and was frustrated he was unable to get into town to start work.

"Those who had life-threatening injuries to start with have probably already died," he said.

In the city and its suburbs, there were few indications of coordinated aid distribution. Outside one government house where aid was being distributed, dozens of people waving their ID cards were turned away because officials said they were handing out supplies by neighborhood.

Rice sacks were stacked along the walls of the house which was guarded by a dozen armed soldiers.

New Year mourning

At one of only two petrol stations open in Banda Aceh, cars backed up for more than 1 km, watched by armed police. Hundreds of people stood in queues carrying jerry cans. *Reuters, AFP, NY Times*

LIFE goes on for the survivors, mostly foreign tourists in Phuket, also the scene of the massive tsunami that claimed lives in the thousands. There's much to celebrate for those who made it to see another new year. ROMEO GACAD/AFP

Global minute of silence, fireworks cancelled

SYDNEY led the world in a global minute of silence before its own New Year celebration. Trees on Paris's grand Champs Elysees were shrouded in black cloth, and the United States said it would fly its flag at half-staff next week. In Indonesia, official celebrations were simply canceled.

On Thailand's tsunami-hit Phuket island, people holding candles and white roses embraced tearfully in a poignant symbol of the mood.

At the stroke of midnight, party-goers stopped and lit incense sticks. The mournful Elton John song "Candle in the Wind" echoed through the resort.

Sweden, Norway, Finland and Germany planned to fly flags at half staff to start 2005 in respect for the dead and missing.

European tourists, who fled a dark winter for the sunshine and sands of Asia, make up most of more than 2,200 foreigners confirmed killed by the tsunami. More than 7,400 were missing.

Relatives and friends flying to Asia in the hope that loved ones were alive scoured gruesome mosaics of photographs of distorted faces pinned on bulletin boards alongside personal possessions that someone might recognize.

The global nature of the catastrophe cast a long shadow on places as far away as Stockholm and Paris.

In the Nordic countries, suffering one of the worst disasters in their history with dozens of dead and thousands of missing, many events were canceled to be replaced by church services and candlelit processions.

However, major events such as the New Year carnival in London were taking place as usual as the world ushered out a year marked by conflict and repeated natural disasters.

With 1,000 German tourists still missing in south Asia, Berlin went ahead with a vast New Year's Eve street party, planning to turn it into a fundraiser.

And the celebrated New Year's ball in Vienna was going ahead with one exception—the orchestra planned to renounce playing the Radetsky March as a sign of solidarity with the victims.

In Indonesia, authorities cancelled fireworks displays.

A death-like silence descended on Sri Lanka—which lost nearly 30,000 people—as the country ushered in the New Year with prayers and mourning.

Instead of a festive crowd setting off fireworks in the capital's Independence Square, hundreds gathered for candlelit vigils.

"Never has the step into a new year felt heavier," said Goeran Persson, Sweden's premier who urged Swedes to light candles in their windows. "We should have celebrated with fireworks and festivities. Now that feels completely wrong."

FATHER and child head toward the provincial capital of Banda Aceh to seek food and shelter as substantial help began arriving and the presence of the US military ensured the speeding up of critically needed aid. REUTERS

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Editor **Ester G. Dipasupil** ■ *Assistant Editor* **Cenon B. Bibe**

Police academy for WPD

By Leila B. Salaverria

PRACTICE makes perfect.

Even if they are given the moniker "Manila's Finest," members of the Western Police District would still be given the chance to hone their skills with the forthcoming inauguration of the Manila Police Academy.

The academy is the pet project of WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, who said he expected it to be inaugurated during the district's 104th anniversary on Jan. 9.

He said the academy would provide in-service training by experts and veteran policemen so that the WPD could offer better services to the people.

"We want our policemen to be well-aware and prepared to handle the very complicated job of enforcing the law and maintaining order," Bulaong told the INQUIRER. "We want to do justice to the name 'Manila's Finest.'"

Like the real thing

He added that short of participating in an actual anticrime operation, the academy would provide training closest to handling incidents like hostage takings, bank robberies, gun battles and explosives control.

Bulaong said the academy would simulate these situations so that the policemen would know what to do should they arise. He added that the training would also emphasize ensuring the safety of civilians who would be involved in crime incidents.

Sometimes, he added, policemen have not participated in an operation for a long time so they forget what they learned in school.

"There is no substitute for training," Bulaong said. "It would help policemen to have a refresher course."

Less deaths

The WPD chief also said that the additional training the academy would provide could ensure that there would be less policemen injured or killed in the line of duty.

"We want them to be careful and competent to avoid unnecessary deaths," he said.

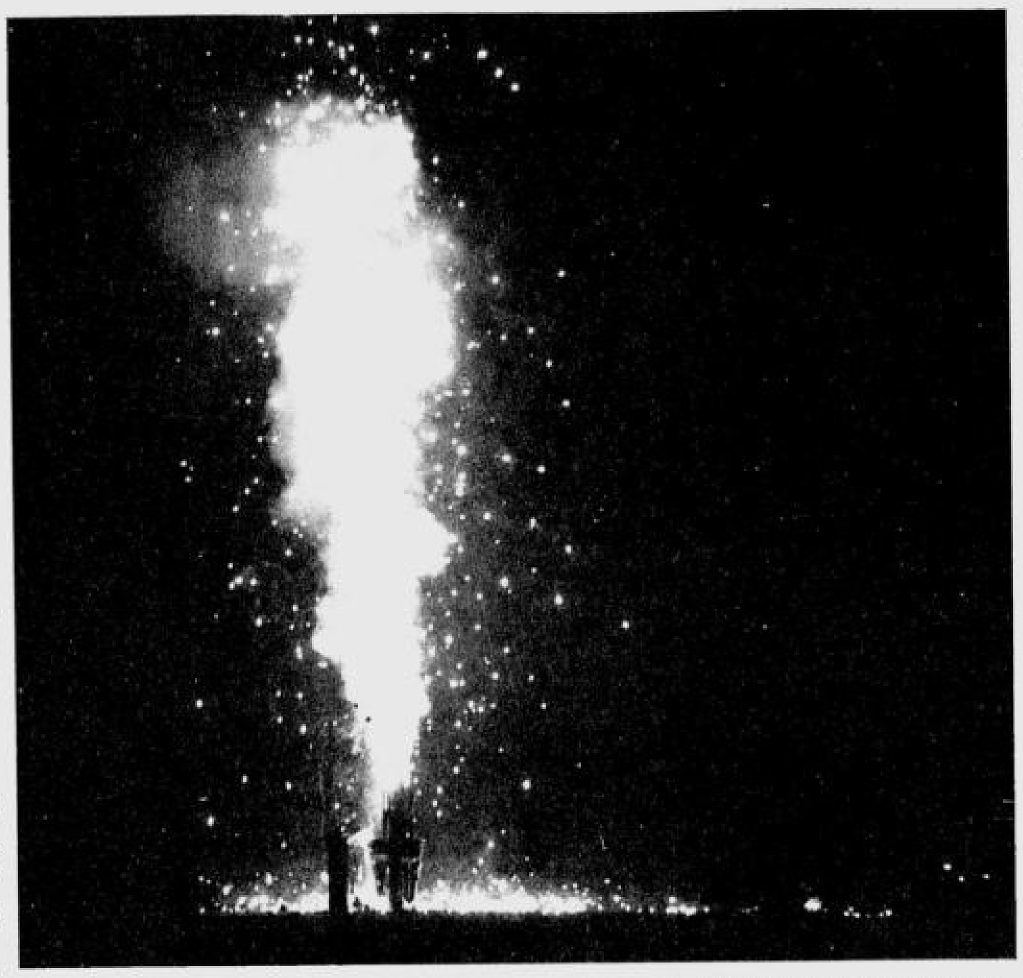
Several Manila policemen died in the line of duty in 2004, most of them losing their lives fighting off armed robbers.

Bulaong hailed the dead policemen as heroes, saying they did all that they could to thwart criminals.

"They are real heroes. They show that they put service above all by offering the supreme sacrifice," he said.

From tragedy springs hope

Man of God tries to see through death, destruction



A FOUNTAIN of light (above) is an image of hope as residents of Sikatuna Village in Quezon City welcome 2005. At left, a gutted room at the IO Family KTV at Jupiter Place building in Makati City shows how destruction can also accompany the New Year.

JOAN BONDOC / REM ZAMORA

By Luige A. del Puerto

GOD IS with His people amid tragedies, expressing a message, giving hope.

This was the core of the New Year's Eve homily of Fr. Alex Balatbat, who spoke of the massive death and destruction that hit the country, South Asia and the rest of the world as 2004 drew to a close.

"How can this be a happy New Year when so many people have died in the country and in the rest of the world?" Balatbat said before the congregation gathered at the Our Lady of the Abandoned Church in Marikina City.

People in the church responded with silence in agreement with the sentiments of Balatbat.

Simple celebration

A parishioner told the INQUIRER that his family was keeping their New Year celebration simple.

"The tragedy loomed large at the back of our minds. It tempered our celebration… and Fr. Balatbat's homily reinforced it," said Raffy Mirabuena, a telecoms employee.

The family's *media noche* consisted of *sotanghon* soup and *putong puti*. When the clock struck 12, Raffy, his wife Nessie and 7-year-old son Chloe stepped out of their home at the middle-class SSS Subdivision in Marikina and lighted a "mini-Judas belt" and a few fountains on the street.

"If it's just us, we can do without the firecrackers. But it would be difficult to explain that to a kid," he said. "But we deliberately chose firecrackers which are not powerful. They were nothing compared to last year," Raffy said.

Fr. Balatbat told the INQUIRER that he chose to talk about the killer tsunamis that devastated parts of Asia and Africa to remind people to temper their celebration.

He said it would not be right for Filipinos to be filled with laughter at this time.

"This is a call for us to unite in mourning. At least 125,000 are dead. There could be more. How can we celebrate the New Year amid this crisis?" he said.

Instead of lavish meals and the loud cracks of pyrotechnics, Balatbat urged families to pray and mourn with the rest of Asia.

Faith kept intact

He added that the tragedy should not take away our faith in God.

"One of the things that I asked from God this year is the wisdom to understand this tragedy," he said.

"In the face of this tragedy, God has a message. What exactly? We don't know yet," he said.

Balatbat said: "Jesus is now in Sri Lanka, in Indonesia, in Thailand, and in the south African nations hit by giant waves. He mourns with us."

But he added that even in mourning, joy can be found.

"Because of the tragedy, the world is united," he said.

Balatbat said he hoped the tragedies that struck here and abroad would give people the humility to realize that they need God in their lives. He also hoped such events would give men the strength to move on.

"We should not live our lives in despair. There is hope amid all these," he said.

Three hurt in Cubao bomb blast

By Tina G. Santos

AMID heightened alert and tight security, unidentified persons managed to trigger a bomb at the busy Cubao commercial district in Quezon City on New Year's Eve.

A report by Central Police District investigators said the bomb was placed in a concrete flower box in front of the Philtrust Bank at Opulent Building, 628 Edsa, corner Gen. Roxas Avenue.

The bank was just across Farmer's Plaza, a popular shopping center, and along a key sidewalk leading to Aurora Boulevard.

Because of the location of the bomb, it was fortunate that only three persons were hurt, one seriously.

Police reported that the explosion occurred at 7:25 p.m. and created a 10-meter wide and four-inch hole on the flower box.

Alma Olesco, 23, of Barangay Paltok, Quezon City; Joy Lachica, 23, of Sta. Mesa, Manila; and Lorenzo Reyes Jr., 31, driver, of Karuhatan, Valenzuela, were passing by when the bomb went off.

Reyes sustained second-degree burns, while Olesco and Lachica only suffered minor injuries, according to police. They were treated at the East Avenue Medical Center.

The explosion also shattered the glass doors and windows of the bank and those of an adjacent travel agency office.

CPD director Senior Supt. Nicasio Radovan said "It was intentional but we're still determining the motive and the people responsible."

Initial investigation showed that TNT, a common ingredient of dynamites, was used in the bomb.

"The Explosive and Ordnance Division is still looking for fragments such as batteries and blasting caps," Radovan said.

The bombing took place even as the police in Metro Manila was put on "full alert" beginning Thursday, the fourth anniversary of the December 2000 Rizal Day bombing, which killed 22 people and hurt more than 100.

A week earlier, on Christmas Eve, police in Manila defused another bomb planted inside a passenger bus.

The bomb in Manila was also built with TNT.

Police explosives experts said the bomb was similar to those built by alleged al Qaeda member Ramsey Yousef and those made by the Abu Sayyaf.

NBI made good in 2004, solving more crimes than in 2003

By Leila B. Salaverria

GOING by the number of cases it solved last year, the National Bureau of Investigation did good in 2004.

The NBI has reported a 5.5 percent increase in the number of cases it terminated last year. The bureau closed 10,106 cases, up from 9,577 in 2003.

Of these cases, several were high-profile crimes involving kidnapping for ransom and murder.

One of these is the rescue of businesswoman Dominga Chu in Caloocan City and the arrest of four of the men who allegedly kidnapped her. The suspects were said to be members of the notorious Waray-Waray kidnap and robbery group.

Also, three suspects in the kidnapping and murder of Chinese-Filipino executive Betti Chua Sy surrendered to the bureau and confessed their participation in the incident.

A Waray-Waray gang leader, Calvin Lagado, was also arrested.

The bureau also scored with high-profile arrests, like that of Eric Alba, the alleged killer of publicist Elias Formaran.

Also arrested this year was Jason Ivler, who was nabbed while attempting to flee the country for Malaysia via Zamboanga City. Ivler, a nephew of famous singer Freddie Aguilar, was the driver of the van that hit and killed presidential adviser Nestor Ponce.

Two boys stabbed to death; father is suspect

By Luige A. del Puerto

IT WAS the bleakest New Year's day for the De Leon family of Pasig City.

At dawn yesterday, Amor de Leon discovered the body of her grandnephew John Michael Sanchez, 6, stuffed inside a refrigerator.

Brother, too

She also found the body of John Michael's younger brother, Joshua, 5, on the second floor of their home on Caliwag Street, Bernardo Compound, Barangay Pinagbuhatan.

The younger boy suffered stab wounds in the chest and abdomen. He failed to make it alive to the hospital. John Michael also died of stab wounds in the chest, the police said.

Yesterday, Amor was still too affected to talk. She kept mostly to herself. Amor's family lives a few blocks away from the children's home.

The police said Amor checked on the children and their father, Jaime de Leon Fil, 27, at about 3 a.m.

Alfredo de Leon, Amor's brother, said he had no idea of the tragedy that had struck the when he came to visit them yesterday morning.

"I just learned of what happened when I came here," he said. "I came to celebrate the New Year, and this is what I walked into."

Fil was nowhere to be found.

He is the primary suspect in the death of his two children, according to Sr. Supt. Raul Medina, city police chief.

"We consider him the primary suspect. He had custody of the children at the time of their deaths, and he is missing now," Medina said.

The news of the twin killings shocked the community of Bernardo Compound.

Neighbor's skepticism

"If he (Fil) indeed did it… I never heard him hurt his children," a neighbor said, shaking his head.

From interviews with neighbors, a sketchy profile of Fil has emerged.

He seemed to be reclusive. He mostly stayed at home with his three children, the youngest of whom was a girl.

It was not immediately clear whether the girl was with her brothers or with her grand-aunt at the time of the killings.

Fil interacted little with neighbors, but was kind to his children, according Ferdie Bola.

Another neighbor said that a few hours before the New Year, several people drinking on the street greeted Fil a "Happy New Year."

"People called out to him to greet him. He did not respond. It was about 9 p.m.," the neighbor said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Quoting family members, Medina said Fil was hoping he could be reunited with his estranged wife on New Year's Day.

"She apparently did not arrive that night," Medina said.

Housing office gets go-ahead for repairs

OPERATIONS are expected to return to normal at the fire-ravaged office of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) in Makati City after Vice President Noli de Castro ordered it repaired immediately.

De Castro went to the NHMFC building on Amorsolo Street the other day to personally inspect the extent of damage caused by the fire.

He then told NHMFC president Celso delos Angeles to fast track repair works on the facility.

De Castro is also chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council.

The Vice President assured clients of NHMFC that the collection service of their housing loan will not be affected by the recent fire that damaged the agency's one-stop collection center.

He tasked Delos Angeles to immediately relocate the collection groups in other areas of the building.

Delos Angeles reported to the Vice President that authorities were still determining the real cause of the blaze that affected the ground floor of the NHMFC building.

However, Angeles assured De Castro that pertinent documents of the agency are intact and secure.

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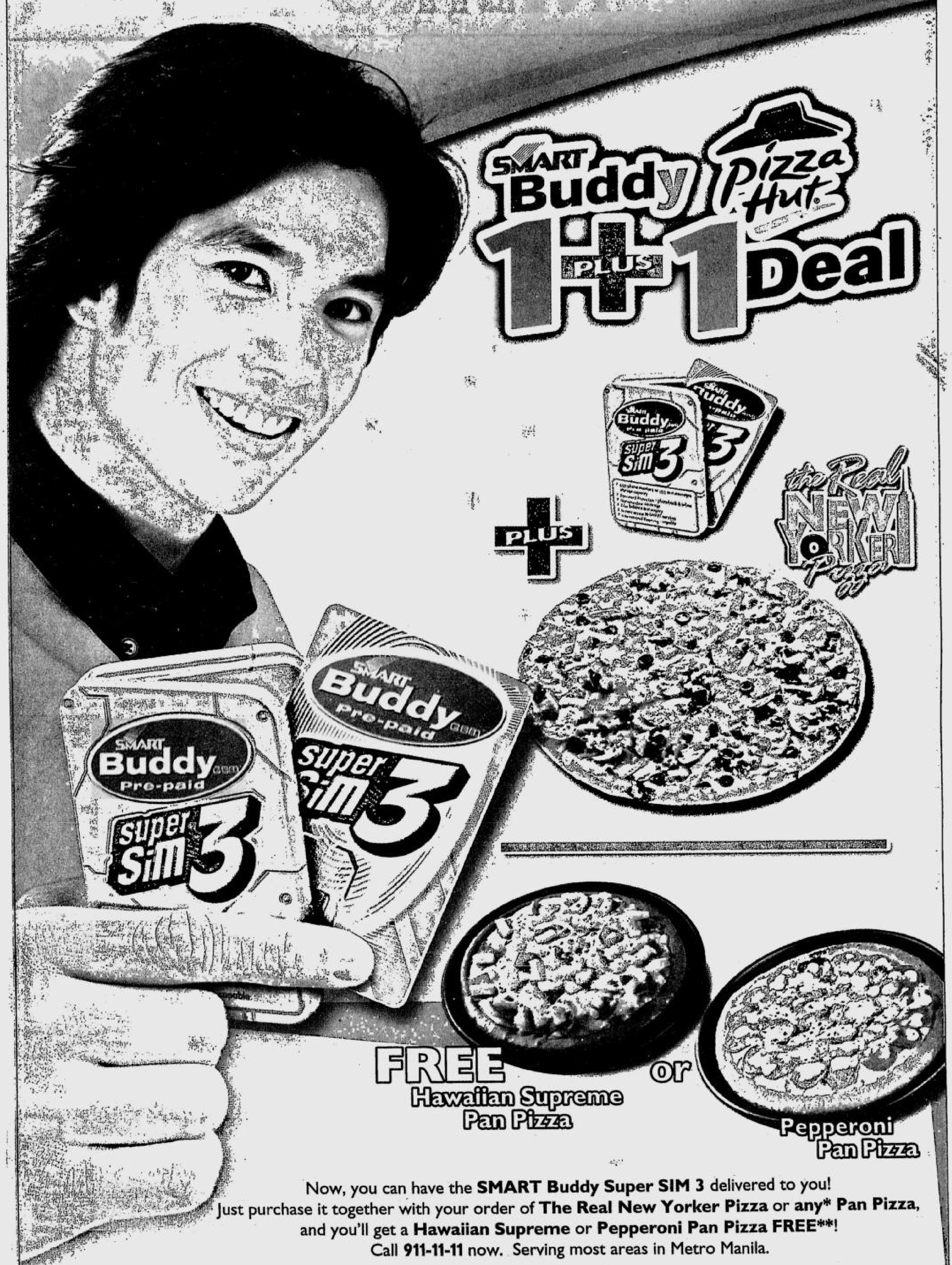
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SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

BASKETBALL: NBA-Nets vs Knicks; 8:30 a.m. (r-11:30 p.m.); Bobcats vs Heat; 12 noon (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports—Will Vince Carter finally suit up for New Jersey when they take on the Knicks even as Charlotte meets Miami?

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: US NCAA-Rose Bowl; 5:30 a.m.; Fiesta Bowl; 9 a.m.; ESPN—Michigan faces Texas in Pasadena, California, while Utah clashes with Pittsburgh in Tempe, Arizona.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- No letup for Wizards /A22
- Celtics, Spurs greet New Year with a bang /A24

Pacquiao still a puzzle

By Recah Trinidad

INSTEAD of heading straight to his California training camp, Manny Pacquiao leaves for Manila today reportedly to shoot a television commercial.

"I don't know what's going on," groaned Team Pacquiao member Moy Lainez.

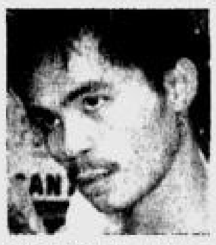
Pacquiao, 26, has remained a puzzle to people concerned over his next fight.

In fact, even Juan Manuel Marquez, his next opponent, has said he did not believe Pacquiao was not yet training for their Feb. 26 rematch.

Marquez, who started serious preparations in November, suspected that Pacquiao's reported carefree schedule could all be a ploy.

Marquez, however, suggested the RP boxing superstar must be at peak form as he (Marquez) would come out raring to rumble for 12 furious rounds in their next duel.

The WBA/IBF featherweight king indicated that he is already "working toward a condition which will give me the capability to fight at full capacity for the whole 12 rounds throwing meaningful punches from the very start to finish."



PACQUIAO PDI PHOTO

This was contained in an interview with Marquez conducted by Boxingscene's James Blears, who traveled to Mexico City's Gilberto Roman Gym to personally get a first-hand account of the Mexican champ's training for his upcoming showdown with Pacquiao.

"This time I'm going to be faster, stronger and more focused," Marquez said. "At this moment I'm engrossed in gym work and physical strength routines. I'm going to start sparring in the first days of January. I'm absolutely determined to leave

PACQUIAO/ A22

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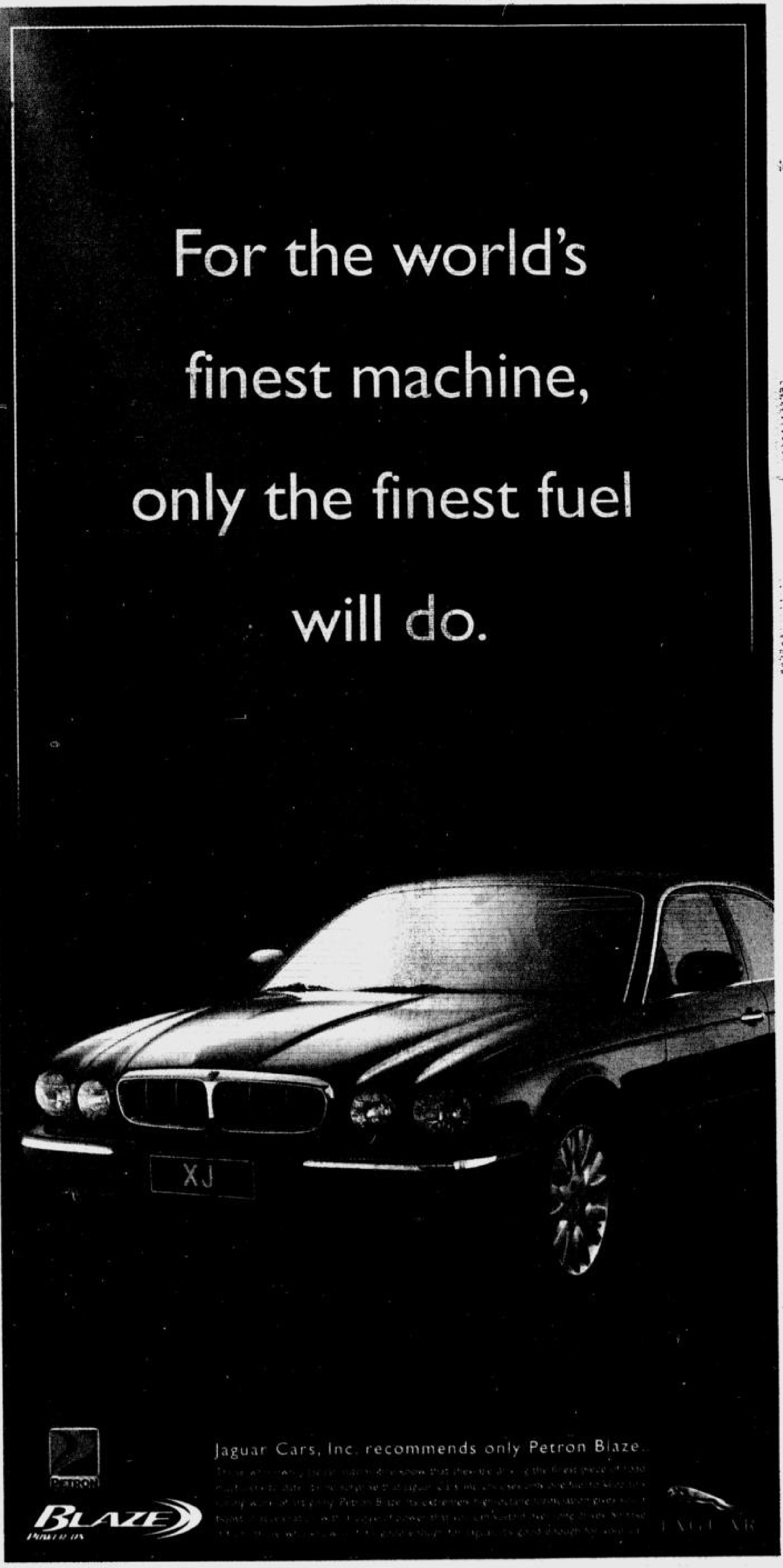
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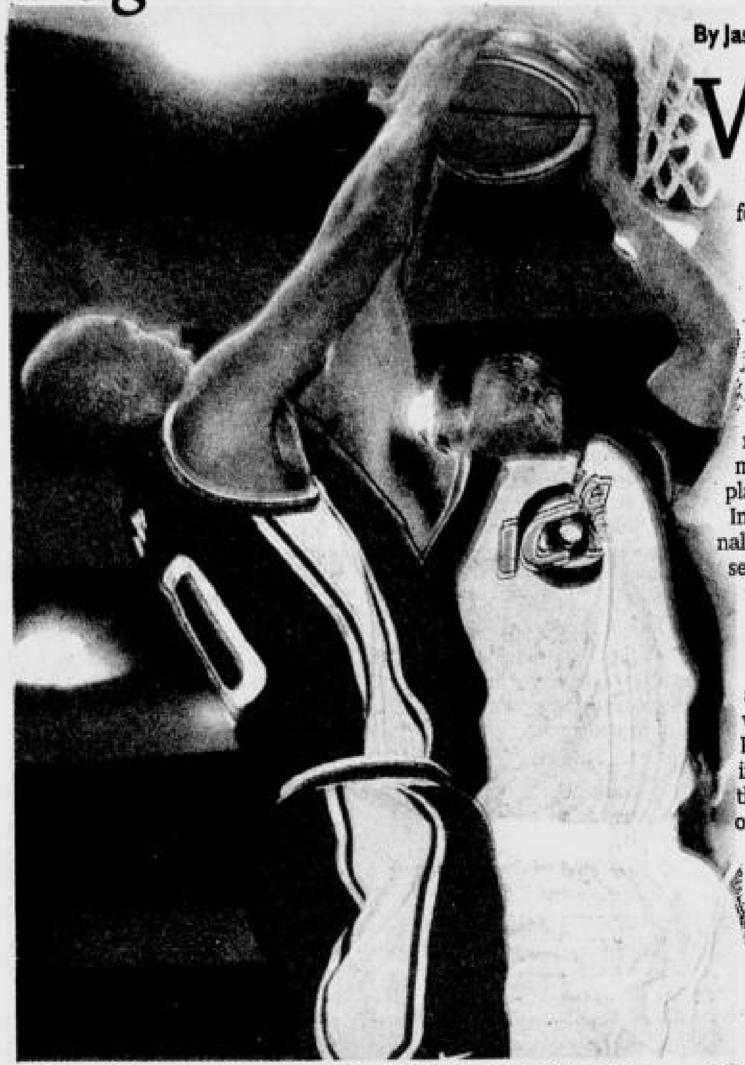
No letup for Wizards

Magnolia-FEU has learned its lessons well



DEFENSE, like the block put up by Gerard Jones en route to foiling ICTSI-La Salle's Jerwin Gaco, has been Magnolia-FEU's greatest ally in their late elimination-round romp.

By Jasmine W. Payo

WHEN the Magnolia-FEU Wizards resume their campaign in the PBL Open tournament, expect coach Koy Banal to remain on his toes.

It was as if Banal hardly found impressive the fact that the Wizards have chalked up seven straight wins to recover from a shaky slide.

In fact, he hardly showed excitement at being the first of two teams to book an outright seat in the semifinals.

"I don't want my players to relax," Banal pointed out. "It might come at a time when we play our crucial games."

Indeed, there's a reason for Banal's cautiousness. Although it seemed like a distant memory now, not everything started out right for the defending champs.

The Wizards were on track after opening the conference with two consecutive wins. But their performance surprisingly went awry as they lost three straight games, including one against lowly AMP-Ateneo.

The losing spell visibly bothered Banal.

But it apparently became a rallying point, as the Wizards poured all efforts to string up wins one after the other.

Winning with their vaunted defense, the Wizards held the opposition to a league-best average of 59.4 points.

A well-balanced offensive has also been carrying them through. They had Cesar Catli, reigning Most Valuable Player Arwind Santos, Dennis Miranda, Warren Ybañez, RJ Rizada and Joel Co alternately hurting their foes.

And proving that they were back in deadly form, the Wizards drubbed opponents with an average winning margin of 16.6 points in their last seven matches.

But even if the Wizards remained on top almost the entire second round, practices continued during the holidays.

"*Kailangan tuluy-tuloy pa rin ang* practices *namin para maganda pa rin ang* conditioning (We need to practice regularly to maintain our conditioning)," said Banal.

Magnolia-FEU currently stands at 9-3, followed by Montaña with an 8-3 slate. Granny Goose and Welcoat Paints share third spot at 6-5.

The Wizards have two more regular games left, against UAAP rival ICTSI-La Salle on Jan. 8 and Montaña, considered as the breakout team this conference, on Jan. 15.

The matches may be inconsequential for the Wizards, but Banal has apparently vowed not to slide back to his team's uncharacteristic losses.

"There will be no letup," he said.

RP whiz kid tops North American chess, bags $5,000

FILIPINO whiz kid Karl Victor Ochoa won $5,000 (roughly P282,000) after topping the 2004 North American Open's 16-under division last week at the Bally's Casino Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Ochoa, a many-time member of the national youth team, came out on top of the 86-man field with 5.5 points, his only draw in the six-round event coming against Hai Hoang Le in the third round.

The third of seven children by a computer programmer from Calumpit town in Bulacan, Ochoa defeated Yuan Ling Yuan, Sergio Gimutao, Immanue Singuillo, Matt Connant and Jared Wood.

In the Open class, Cebuano IM Enrico "Ikong" Sevillano scored 4.5 points to finish in a tie for fifth. Melandro "Mel" Singson tallied 3.5/6 to wind up tied for 14th in the Under-22 division that drew 73 participants.

Meanwhile, in Hastings, England, IM Jayson Gonzales suffered his first setback at the hands of 18-year-old GM Mark Bluvshtein of Canada in the Hastings International Chess Congress Friday at the Horntye Park.

The 33-year-old Gonzales remained with 2.0 points and will face Fide Master Robert Eames of England in the fourth roun.J. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Pacquiao still a puzzle

From page A21

nothing to chance in my buildup. In particular, I'm concentrating on more speed and honing my reflexes."

The Mexican also credited Pacquiao, describing the Filipino champ as "obviously a very handy two-handed fighter, but his left is more potent. So we're concentrating more on that side. Our strategy is for Manny not to connect cleanly with his left."

Broadcaster Ronnie Nathanielz, a trusted Team Pacquiao insider, would try to see the boxer today to check on the Filipino sensation and find out the real score.

"What a clear message for Pacquiao," said premier Jazz artist Richard Merk.

"I agree 200 percent with the INQUIRER," he added over suggestions that Pacquiao would again be cramming in preparing for his next fight.

Restaurateur Peter Lee of Hong Kong Tea House said he is thinking of withdrawing a bet he placed on Pacquiao at reports on the boxer's tardiness.

Pacquiao is scheduled to leave for the Wild Card Boxing Gym to link up with trainer Freddie Roach for the Marquez rematch. *With a report from Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

Del Rosario leads RP bowlers

THE RP bowling team with Liza del Rosario and Chester King at the helm, begins the ball rolling for the country in 2005 as it competes in the Grand Finals of the Asian Bowling Tour in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Set Jan. 13-16 at the Jaya Ancol Bowl, the Tournament of Champions features the 18 men and top 16 women bowlers in the Asian region based on their respective tour rankings.

Del Rosario, fresh from her semifinal stint in the World Cup last month, along with King, a World Cup quarterfinalist, head the seven-man RP squad vying for top honors in both the men and women's division, respectively.

The rest of the Filipino team includes Biboy Rivera, Joonee Gatchalian, Tyrone Ongpauco, Irene Benitez and Jojo Canare. King is on top of the men's class with 162 ranking points while Benitez is the highest ranked among the Filipinas at No. 2 with 173.5 points, just below leader Putty Armein of the host country (199).

The 26-year-old del Rosario, winner of last year's ABF Asian Bowling Tour Grand Finals, is at seventh with 132 points.

Agojo eyes strong RP Open stint

THERE are a full six months left before Jayvie Agojo finally packs her bags to take up a golf scholarship at Pepperdine University, which she will represent in the tough US NCAA golf wars.

For now, however, her focus is on a tournament closer to home.

The past two months, however, Agojo has been pounding the fairways and killing time at the driving range for one big mission to complete—the Philippine Ladies Open golf championship.

For Agojo, it's going to be one tough competition, especially with the expected arrival of national players from all over Southeast Asia. And while she's bracing for the worst, Jayvie is also hoping for the best.

"I've never hit so many balls a day in my life and it's been that way for the last two months. It's the only way to reach the level I want not just for the NCAA but also for the Philippine Open," said the 18-year-old golf princess, who came close to winning the crown two years ago but lost to the now-professional Heidi Chua.

"I know there will be a lot of good players out there who would play to win and having trained hard enough, I'm really looking forward to the competition," said Agojo.

Agojo has been making big strides the past two months, placing 12th overall in the Puerto Rico world amateurs for an impressive maiden stint with the national team. She had also topped the Manila Ladies Amateur at Wack Wack and qualified for the Samsung Amateur finals after a spectacular comeback at the Cebu Country Club.

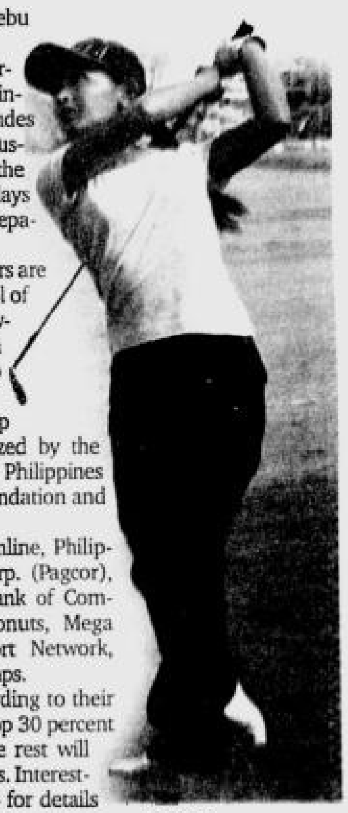
Agojo, who will not join Pepperdine until August this year, will be joining a very young field that includes Frances Bondad, an American-Australian whose parents were born in the Philippines. Bondad arrived two days ago and has also started her own preparations.

Also among the foreign challengers are two teeners who are now in the pool of the Thailand national team, five low-handicappers also among the best in Malaysia at the moment and two aces from Hong Kong.

Singapore is also sending its top bets to the 54-hole event organized by the Women's Golf Association of the Philippines which has the First Gentleman Foundation and Herma Group as major sponsors.

Providing support are Pacific Online, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), Park Lane Jewelers, PacSports, Bank of Commerce, INQUIRER Golf, Dunkin Donuts, Mega Magazine, Callaway, All Transport Network, Crucible Gallery and Key Stone Lamps.

The field will be classified according to their scores after the first day with the top 30 percent making up the championship. The rest will play for the Class A and Class B titles. Interested parties may call 0917-5295324 for details or e-mail wgap71@hotmail.com.



AGOJO

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The day after

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE BEST is yet to come.

We hear that most of the time from people who are mostly jolly, if not positive thinkers.

It makes sense. You think positive, it lightens your load, your baggage.

You win a close contest and you say, "You ain't seen nuthin' yet," that's like saying the best is yet to come. Hey, "Here's-lookin'-at-you-kid."

We may not have achieved some of our goals in 2004, fine. There's always another year to try to achieve the unachieved dreams. The trick is, always keep trying. As the saying goes, "Try and try until you succeed."

A couple of days ago, I saw a film at Hallmark channel. The old man in the movie, who knew he was dying, said to his youngest son and grandson: "There is no falling, there is only discovering."

When I fall, I discover that life is in the falling, not in the rising.

You rise without first falling, that's a jackpot. A jackpot is basically a miracle. A miracle is basically Godmade.

If you can't believe that, you got a king-sized problem, buddy.

To stress the point, if you are truly a positive thinker, you say the best is yet to come once you hit a jackpot, such as the lotto, or sweepstakes. Because the best, ultimately, is God's score when the final buzzer sounds.

I asked U-Bix man Bert Bravo, the owner of Dolphy favorite Grappa's Ristorante at Greenbelt 3, what he usually does the day after the first day of the year.

"While away the time in Dumaguete City," he said.

From Marlene Ochoa of MNTC: "Day of contemplation."

Ken Angeles, the proud owner of After Dark, a popular night haunt in Davao City: "At the golf course, playing golf what else?"

Danny Isla, first vice president of Toyota Motors Philippines: "House *lang*, Sir Paul."

Alice Andrada, the ageless beauty from Iligan City: "After spending New Year in Boracay, I will play golf the next day and then treat myself to a spa! How does that sound to you?"

Anthony de Leon, the general manager of Baguio Country Club: "Still working."

Interesting answers, aren't they?

Anthony's reply exudes not just love for his job, even if he's into it 365 days a year. Some may call it boring. Not Anthony. He calls it passion, a position that makes Rico Agcaoili, BCC president, proud of Anthony all year round.

Anthony's attitude recalls the line from Aristotle (384-422 BC): "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act but a habit."

Danny Isla's "House *lang*" answer is too laid-back? But knowing "Sir John" Danny, his answer is his way of saying, "I need to slow down, relax." I know he was busy as a bee during the holidays; his position called for it.

The contemplating Marlene, I envy. I guess I will also do my own contemplating today—in faraway Roxas City, where buddies Nelson, Nono, Dante and Nonong hope to share their feast of oysters, plus the rustic atmosphere of Capiz serenity, with Ling, Diding, Ching, Astrid, Tia Rosie, Inday, Soly and me.

In much the same way that *Pareng* Bert a.k.a. EBB is now communing with nature in his hideaway of a paradise that is Dumaguete.

And what about Alice and Ken? Well, golfers will always be golfers. Thus to them, just like any house of prayer the world over, no golf course ever closes any day of the year.

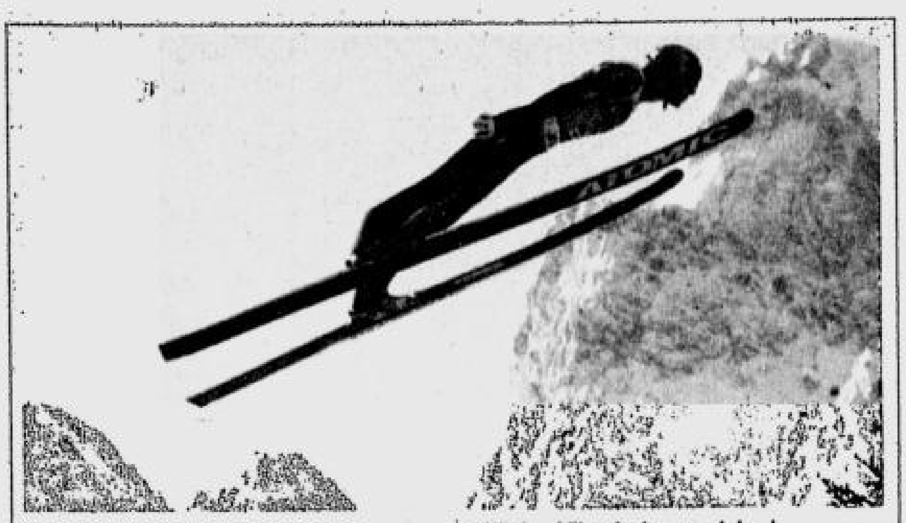
Happy New Year!

***

FASTBREAK. I have to doff my hat off to Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato. Despite his very hectic schedule, he still finds time to indulge in boxing, his true passion. Tonight at 8, Governor Piñol will host the fight between flyweight boxing sensation Prince Gabi and Thai Samsuk Singmanasuk on NBN 4. All the best, *Pareng* Gob.

YEAREND RACEFEST

Niles, Zarate, Dilema victorious



STRONG FINNISH: Ski jumper Janne Ahonen of Finland flies during a training jump at the second leg of the Four Hills Ski Jumping series in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Ahonen currently heads the rankings.

AFP

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

PHILTOBO chief Bienvenido Niles Jr. and star jockeys Jeffril Zarate and Pat Dilema made the loudest bangs at the close of the 2004 racing season Friday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Niles' gallopers Windlass and Elite triumphed in two of the 10 special races on tap, while Zarate and Dilema notched three victories each during the New Year's Eve festival put up by the Philippine Racing Commission.

"*Nakatsamba tayo* (We had a lucky win)," said Niles. "Happy New Year to all of you."

Zarate masterminded the wins of Windlass in the Games and Amusements Board Cup and Elite in the Klub Don Juan de Manila Cup, before capping his day on a high note with yet another brilliant ride on import Stowaway Lass in the Philippine Racing Club Cup.

"*Sinuwerte. Sana ganito lagi sa* 2005 (I got lucky. I hope this stays in 2005)," said Zarate, whose mounts won P200,000 each.

Windlass, a 5-year-old bay mare by Treasure Cay out of Jaime Leigh, triumphed in wire-to-wire fashion, negotiating the 1,600-meter event in 1:42.4. Alexis Magic finished four lengths behind then came Art of Rose and Gifted Guest.

In contrast, Elite did what he loves most, coming from behind to win by two lengths over Sambat. The 3-year-old bay filly by Yonder out of Halo Landing timed 1:37 in the 1,525-meter contest.

Stowaway Lass, the 5-year-old daughter by With Class out of Royal Pirate who landed fourth in the recent Classic Open, outclassed her rivals, prevailing by seven lengths over Puppy Dog Tail.

As for Dilema, the 26-year-old ace rider climaxed another banner year with wins on Super Wind in the Philtobo Cup, Air Force One in the Trainers' Cup and Open Sky in the Pinoy H-Racing Cup. Dilema is set to receive his fourth straight PSA Jockey of the Year award on Jan. 13.

"*Nagpapasalamat po ako sa Diyos at sa lahat ng mga sumusuporta sa akin lalo na sa mga* fans (I want to thank the Lord and all those who are supporting me especially the fans)," said Dilema.

Air Force One (Medium Cool-Marilag), drew away in the home turn to beat top choice Money for Rap by five lengths. Super Wind (Hazm-Write Me Fast) also kicked clear in the stretch, crossing the line four lengths up on Sweet Alyssa, while Open Sky (Thunder Vic-La Boriqueña) shook off her rivals down the wire for a two-length win on Boogie Shoes.

Completing the day's big winners were import Sound Offer (Marho Cup), Sir Brendan Jean (Manila Jockey Club Cup) and Doctor Steve (Jockeys Cup), who were guided by Louie Balboa, Jesse Guce and Cesar Santos, respectively.

"In behalf of the Philracom, I would like to thank all the various sectors in racing, as well as our generous sponsors and the racing fans for helping us achieve another successful year in the industry. Happy New Year to all," said Philracom chair Jimmy Dilag, who was joined in the awarding by commissioners Eddie Jose and Vergel Cruz.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Starry Night 2. Silver Music 3. Astimegoesby 4. Guts 5. Bold Lucky
Race 2—1. Native Land 2. Albatross 3. Cat's Jewel 4. Dato's Pride
Race 3—1. Footwear 2. Master Ijhay
Race 4—1. Sovereign Queen 2. King Size 3. Mano Po 4. Pirouette 5. Princess Sarah
Race 5—1. Gleaming Heart 2. Join the Saints 3. Ravishing Raffy 4. Say It's True 5. Sham Sham 6. Reign of Fire
Race 6—1. Duces Tecum 2. Parrot Moe 3. Blitzkrieg 4. Mr. Bonjing 5. Tenacity
Race 7—1. Real Slew 2. Lord of All 3. Don Paolo
Race 8—1. Gold Is Gold 2. Naughty 3. Golden Harry 4. Showtime Lady 5. King Yoji 6. Silver Dollar
Race 9—1. Queen Matawe 2. Split Decision 3. Magic Dancer 4. Soaring Free 5. Power of the Wind
Race 10—1. Top of D Line 2. Red Bells 3. Ilocos Pride 4. Showman 5. Mr. Lucas 6. Princess Inn
Race 11—1. I Miss You 2. Fancy Dancer 3. Habagat 4. Guest House
Race 12—1. Speed Advantage/Speedster 2. Strong Red 3. Nitty Gritty 4. Hezagonebabes 5. Flying Machine/Vice Free
Race 13—1. Refreshing 2. Snow Princess 3. Sky Bound 4. Western Dancer 5. Ole Ole Ole 6. Prickly Heat

Moncera forges twin kill

LEYAN Moncera of Olongapo completed a double kill following a 6-3, 7-5 victory over Vincent Atienza in the premier boys' 18-under division at the close of the 2004 MILO Junior Tennis Cup at the Philam Homes Tennis Club in Quezon City.

Moncera, who had earlier bagged the boys' 16-under trophy, shared the limelight with Gerald Ndo in the boys' 14-under; Regina Santiago in the girls' 12-under; Zhane Quitara in the girls' 14-under; Christine Patrimonio in the girls' 16-under; and Michelle Pang in the girls' 18-under categories.

Santiago edged Joan Opulencia, 7-6, 6-3; Quitara downed Patrimonio, 6-4, 7-6; Christine got back at Zhane in the higher division, 6-4, 7-6; and Pang routed Regine Monsod, 6-2, 6-0.

On hand to award the Milo trophies was Philam Homes Tennis Club president Levi Castillo.

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Best Screenplay CRIS VERTIDO
PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Best Cinematography ELY CRUZ
PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Best Editing MANET DAYRIT
SIGAW
Best Child Performer ELLA GUEVARRA
SIGAW
Most Gender-Sensitive Film AISHITE IMASU
Best Musical Score NONONG BUENCAMINO
PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Best Sound Recording ARNOLD PINEDA
SIGAW

Best Theme Song PAGBIGYAN ANG PUSO KO
MANO PO 3
Star of the Night MALE - CHRISTOPHER DE LEON
FEMALE- VILMA SANTOS
Best Supporting Actor DENNIS TRILLO
AISHITE IMASU
Best Supporting Actress REBECCA LUSTERIO
PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Best Director CESAR MONTANO
PANAGHOY SA SUBA
Best Picture MANO PO 3
Best Actor CHRISTOPHER DE LEON
MANO PO 3
Best Actress VILMA SANTOS
MANO PO 3

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2005 Yankees to breach $200 million payroll barrier

NEW YORK—There appear to be few, if any, limits to what the Yankees can afford, the reason they can add Randy Johnson and perhaps Carlos Beltran to their firmament of stars. Then again, money is no object when you play in a city where apartments sell for $44 million, nursery schools can command $24,000, and dinner for two at a top restaurant can cost $1,000.

New York's acquisition of Randy Johnson from Arizona, which is likely to be completed next week, will boost the Yankees' payroll to about $205 million, easily topping the major league record of $187.9 million they set in 2004.

The Yankees, with a bottomless pit of cash and, some would say, arrogance, must pay a $25 million luxury tax for last season—about $600,000 more than Tampa Bay's entire payroll.

Owner George Steinbrenner certainly doesn't mind spending as long as the World Series flag flies above his ballpark. Problem is, it hasn't since 2000. But that hasn't stopped him.

'You have to win'

"When you accept big money from Mr. Steinbrenner," first baseman Tino Martinez said, "you have to win."

Martinez, who helped the Yankees win four World Series titles and five American League pennants from 1996-2001, rejoined the team Friday as a backup to Jason Giambi. He knows how Yankees fans view last season's team, which was an inning away from sweeping Boston in the AL championship series only to become the first major league team to squander a 3-0 lead in a best-of-seven series.

"They came up short, they failed," Martinez said bluntly. "They have to win a world championship. That's what they're there for."

New York and Arizona finalized paperwork Friday for the Johnson trade and plan to submit it Monday to commissioner Bud Selig for approval. The Yankees are sending the Diamondbacks pitcher Javier Vazquez, prospects Brad Halsey and Dioner Navarro and $9 million. As part of the deal, they want a 72-hour window to discuss a contract extension for Johnson, a 41-year-old left-hander who has won five Cy Young Awards.

The Yankees' economics are far different from those of every other major league team. Their box seats near the infield will go for $90 a game next year.

Of course, that's peanuts and Cracker Jacks for the city's well-heeled baseball fans. For many New Yorkers, money really is no obstacle.

For example, this week at Zabar's, a famous West Side food emporium, there was an express line just for caviar. At Citarella, another mecca for gourmands, white truffles were going for $199 an ounce.

Fans of cabaret singer Bobby Short pay a $95 cover charge before he ever tickles the ivories or a single drink is poured at Cafe Carlyle.

Those numbers are infinitesimal when compared to Manhattan's booming real-estate prices. According to Halstead's third-quarter survey, the average sale price of a small two-bedroom apartment was $963,127 in the third quarter. The average for a large two-bedroom was $1,277,401.

Perhaps the most incredible example of all: News Corp. CEO Rupert Murdoch is in the process of buying a three-floor Fifth Avenue apartment from the late Laurance S. Rockefeller's estate and will pay $44 million in cash—no mortgages allowed. That tops the record $42.25 million businessman David Martinez paid when he bought two condominium units to combine them into one at the Time Warner Center.

Revenues

The Yankees had revenues of roughly $315 million in 2004, taking in about $130 million from ticket sales alone. Boston, which had the No. 2 payroll at $130 million, estimated its revenue at $220 million.

Yankees manager Joe Torre, as well as Yankees fans, know that after he plucks these stars from other teams, Steinbrenner readies himself for the new season by thinking about 162 wins, 0 losses, and postseason sweeps all the way through the World Series.

Anything less is a failure.

"When you work for George Steinbrenner," Torre said, "whether you're the favorite or you're not the favorite, you're expected to win."

No matter the price. *AP*

Celtics, Spurs greet New Year with a bang

BOSTON—Paul Pierce scored 26 points and Gary Payton added 18 Friday as the Boston Celtics broke a three-game losing streak with a 108-103 victory over the Washington Wizards.

Boston snapped a 103-all tie when Pierce made one of two freethrows with 34 seconds remaining. Jiri Welsch increased the lead to 106-103 with two freethrows with 11.5 seconds left.

Washington's Antawn Jamison tried a 3-pointer from the right corner with 6.7 seconds left but the ball hit the rim.

Ricky Davis, who came off the bench to score 15, made two freethrows with 3.3 seconds left to seal Boston's second win in their last six games.

The Wizards were without leading scorer Gilbert Arenas, who missed the game with flu-like symptoms.

Larry Hughes tied a season high with 33 points, including 6-of-6 on 3-pointers, to lead Washington. Jamison added 29.

Welsch scored 10 points and Raef LaFrentz 12 for the Celtics.

SuperSonics 103, Bobcats 97

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Rashard Lewis scored 27 points and Seattle made 11 3-pointers.

Vladimir Radmanovic added 21 points on 5-for-7 shooting from 3-point range, and Ray Allen had 18 points for the Sonics. Emeka Okafor led the Bobcats with a career-high 27 points and also had 10 rebounds for his 18th straight double-double.

The Sonics scored 42 points in the paint, and shot 50 percent from 3-point range. Still, Charlotte trailed by five with 30 seconds to play until Gerald Wallace's turnover was converted into Lewis' dunk that wrapped up the Seattle win.

The Sonics led 57-45 at halftime, but the Bobcats pulled back into the game with a furious third quarter. Okafor and Brezec combined for 16 points, and Wallace was all over the court, as usual, scaring the Bobcats with his head-first dive into the bench that had the coaching staff briefly cradling his head to make sure he was OK.

Spurs 98, Clippers 79

In Los Angeles, Tim Duncan scored 23 points, and Tony Parker added 21 points and 11 assists to help San Antonio win its fifth straight game.

The Southwest Division-leading Spurs, off to the best start in franchise history, improved to 25-6 with their 17th victory in 20 games despite the early ejection of coach Gregg Popovich. Corey Maggette and Rick Brunson each had 17 points for the Clippers.

The Clippers dropped to 13-14, marking the 25th time in 29 years that the franchise took a losing record into New Year's Day—not counting the lockout-delayed 1998-99 campaign. It was the third time in four games that the team has scored fewer than 80 points, and the 10th time they failed to reach 90.

The Spurs began the fourth quarter with a 15-6 run that opened up an 85-68 lead with 7:18 to play. Brent Barry capped the rally with two freethrows and Los Angeles got no closer than 15.

Kings 109, Jazz 102

In Salt Lake City, Chris Webber scored 14 of his 25 points in the third quarter to help the Sacramento Kings beat the Utah Jazz.

Peja Stojakovic led the Kings with 26 points, and Mike Bibby and Brad Miller each added 17. Carlos Boozer led the Jazz with 25 points and 10 rebounds.

Webber keyed a 9-0 run early in the third quarter that gave Sacramento a 66-58 lead. After going 2-of-9 from the field the first half, Webber was 7-of-8 in the third quarter, including three dunks.

Webber's jumper gave Sacramento a 76-68 lead with 2:05 left in the quarter, and Mike Bibby closed out the scoring in the period via a three-point play with 47 seconds left to make it 81-70.

Stojakovic scored 13 points in the final 6 minutes, including a 3-pointer that banked in with 2:46 left that gave the Kings a 106-94 lead.

Nuggets 97, 76ers 92

In Denver, Carmelo Anthony had 24 points in his return from an ankle injury and the Nuggets made Michael Cooper a winner in his NBA coaching debut.

Cooper became the interim coach Tuesday after a six-game losing streak and a 13-15 start cost Jeff Bzdelik his job.

Philadelphia's Allen Iverson scored 29 points, but had just four in the fourth quarter and finished 11-of-28 from the field.

Playing most of the game without three starters, Denver scrambled around on defense and played just well enough on defense to win for just the second time in 10 games.

Philadelphia's Allen Iverson scored 29 points, but had just four in the fourth quarter and finished 11-of-28 from the field.

Marc Jackson added 15 points, and Kyle Korver had 13 points and 10 rebounds for the 76ers, who had their five-game road winning streak end.

Rockets 105, Bucks 90

In Houston, Tracy McGrady had 42 points to lead the Houston Rockets to a 105-90 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks.

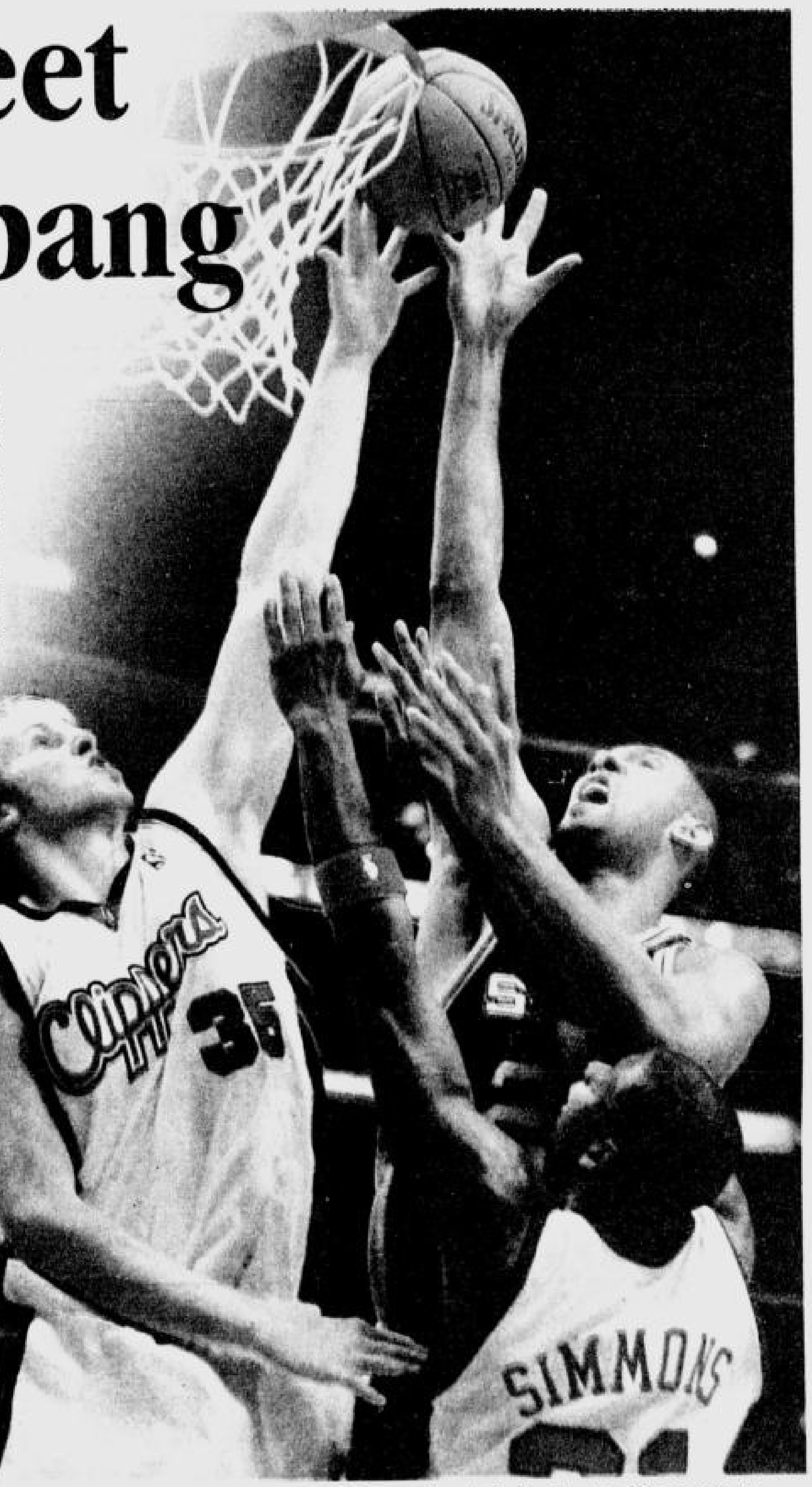
Maurice Taylor added 16 points to help the Rockets reach .500 (15-15) for the first time since they were 6-6 on Nov. 21. Houston has won nine of its last 13 games.

Rockets center Yao Ming missed a game for the first time in his NBA career, sitting out because of the flu.

Michael Redd led the Bucks with 21 points.

McGrady scored nine points, including a four-point play, to help Houston take a 13-4 lead. He had 17 points in the first quarter to stake Houston to a 27-20 advantage.

In the third quarter, Houston had a 10-0 run, the last eight points by McGrady, to help maintain an 11-point lead. *AP*



SAN ANTONIO Spurs main man Tim Duncan threads the Los Angeles defense and puts up a tough shot against the Clippers' Chris Kaman (35) and Bobby Simmons. The Spurs won to push the Clippers to yet another losing record to start the year. AP

National Caddies' Open list-up deadline set

REGISTRATION for the first National Caddies' Open, a tournament that offers prizes unlike any in the world, will now be accepted with the deadline set Jan. 18.

Regular male caddies in any golf club in the country can start coordinating with management of their respective mother clubs starting this week for nomination forms.

Tournament co-chairpersons Benjamin Abalos and Hermie Esguerra are expecting the list to easily top a hundred players, who will vie for prizes that will change their lives forever.

Tommy Manotoc, chair of the organizing Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation, and event executive director Tony Arevalo will screen the entries.

"Starting this year, deserving caddies will see their fortunes change," said Abalos, a former bagman like Arevalo who both serve as inspirations of the tournament.

Applicants should be no more than 35 years old on the last day of the tournament, of good moral standing carrying a handicap of six and below and must be willing to train religiously for the next two years.

There will be no limit to the number of entries for each golf club provided that applicants pass the qualifications set by the screening committee.

The tournament is set over 72 holes on Feb. 1-4, with the first 36 holes to be held at the Calatagan Golf Club in Batangas, the third round at Canlubang North and the final 18 at Wack Wack East.

The champion and the next two placers of the event will be asked to take leaves of absence from their mother clubs as the NCO will fund and train them for the next two years.

A monthly allowance, free board and lodging at the Calatagan for the players and their families, and training under the watchful eyes of swing guru Bong Lopez await the top three placers.

They will also be supplied with the most modern equipment and be made to play in every major amateur tournament here and overseas, all through the efforts of the organization.

The vision of the National Caddies' Open is to be able to come up with the talent that will be worthy of spots to future Philippine teams, with the organizers believing the talent to be in the caddies' pool.

World Amateur veteran Dave Hernandez will answer all inquiries at tel. nos. (0917) 8425275, (0917) 8425257. Filled-up entry forms can be faxed through (0919) 5470619 or sent by courier to the Calatagan Golf Club in Batangas.

SOMBER CELEBRATION: Wide receiver J.R. Russell #3 of the Louisville Cardinals celebrates after a touchdown reception against the Boise State Broncos during the AutoZone Liberty Bowl at the Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tennessee. Louisville defeated Boise State 44-40. AFP

Klitschko honored

KIEV—European Footballer of the Year Andriy Shevchenko and boxer Vitali Klitschko were awarded their country's highest honor, a "Hero of Ukraine," on Friday.

The outgoing Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma signed a decree to honor the AC Milan striker "for his outstanding contribution to Ukrainian football."

Kuchma also honored heavyweight champion Klitschko, who holds the World Boxing Council crown.

Shevchenko was in Kiev on Friday to show his Ballon D'Or award received earlier this month to young players of the Dynamo Kiev academy—where his own footballing career had started.

The 28-year-old, who was also shortlisted for FIFA's World Player of the Year award, was the top scorer in the Series A last season. *Reuters*

Mayol rival vows victory

THE FORTHCOMING titular defense of Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation minimumweight kingpin Rodel Mayol on January 29 promises to be exciting as Thai challenger Phalangchai Sor Vorapin vowed to go all-out and snatch the Filipino's belt.

The 21-year-old Phalangchai, a native of Bolilom Province in Thailand and now fighting out of the Surapol Gym of Bangkok, also informed that he is fully aware of Mayol's reputation as a heavy-hitter, but vowed to repulse the champion when they meet in a 12-round war at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

The event, promoted by Lope Sarreal Jr. and Stonewall Boxing Gym, is part of Senator Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.'s sports development program and part of the proceeds will be donated to the coming SEA Games to be held in Manila this November 2005.

"I respect Mayol as a good champion," said the Thai. "He is undefeated. But I have a job to do, and that is to win and bring back the title and world rankings to Thailand."

The Mandaue-raised Mayol, who was promised a No. 1 ranking by WBC president Jose Sulaiman during the last WBC Convention, will use this bout as his final preparation for a crack at newly-crowned WBC champ Isaac Bustos of Mexico, who recently dethroned Eagle Kyowa for the title. *Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

SeeeMall!

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Banderas back soon as Zorro

SHOW TIME

GET READY for the return of Antonio Banderas as he once again takes the role of Alejandro de la Vega in the upcoming movie "Legend of Zorro," a sequel to the 1998 blockbuster "Mask of Zorro."

Working with the same team in "Mask of Zorro" such as actress Catherine Zeta-Jones, cinematographer Phil Meheux and director Martin Campbell, Banderas claims "Legend of Zorro" is far better than the first one. In one of his interviews, he said, "It still keeps the adventure feeling and it keeps us with a hero, which is I think fundamental for Zorro. But it's a little bit more mature. It's more based on jealousy and concepts that are more for us than for kids."

In the new movie, Alejandro (Banderas), his wife Elena (Zeta-Jones), the daughter of the late Don Diego de la Vega (Anthony Hopkins in "Mask of Zorro"), and his 10-year-old son Joaquin are quietly settling in San Francisco. Eight years have gone by, Zorro is once again summoned after powerful tyrant Armand (Rufus Sewell) maneuvers the country with immense cruelty.

Soon to be released by Columbia Pictures, "Legend of Zorro" is written by Alex Kurtzman, Roberto Orci, Terry Rossio, and Ted Elliot.

To date, there have been 37 Zorro movies released in various parts of the globe since 1920. Originally written by Johnston McCulley in 1919, Zorro has also been seen in at least five live series and an animated series which debuted in 2000.

Mandy Moore's biggest hits

MANDY Moore fans and music lovers will surely enjoy the collection of her greatest hits in "The Best of Mandy Moore."

The 14 tracks take the listener on a journey from Mandy's premiere single, "Candy," when she first burst into the scene as a blonde teenager in 1999, to a more mature brunette with covers of Todd Rundgren's "Can We Still be Friends" and John Hiatt's "Have a Little Faith in Me."

Also in the album are the hits "Candy," "Walk Me Home," "So Real" and "I Wanna Be With You" from her debut CD "So Real"; "In My Pocket," "Crush" and "Cry" from her self-titled album; "Only Hope" from the box-office hit "A Walk to Remember" where she starred and sang; "Senses Working Overtime" and "I Feel the Earth Move" from her latest release, "Coverage."

A bonus VCD features Mandy's videos for "Candy," Walk Me Home," "So Real," "I Wanna Be With You," "In My Pocket," "Crush", "Cry" and "Have A Little Faith In Me," and exclusive recordings of her live performances at the AOL Sessions.

The 20-year-old singer has been in the business since she was 15.

She also had a stint as an MTV VJ in the US in 2001. In the Philippines, she was the endorser of Penshoppe, together with Manila-based Australian model Brad Turvey.

"The Best of Mandy Moore" is now available on CDs and cassettes in all record bars nationwide.

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Young stars bring hope...

From page A27

isn't easy for a matinee idol to agree to play an antihero, but Jericho took that risky step, and his reputation as a serious young actor was affirmed.

Aside from acting, Jericho is also good at photography. When we visited the set of "Santa Santita" some months back, he showed us some of his slides, and we saw that he had the "eye" of the insightful photographer. He should hold an exhibit of his works this year.

Finally, we want to focus the show biz spotlight on **Paw**, one of the current "Star Circle Quest" finalists. The tall and dusky charmer caught our eye early on in the talent search, and she was our best bet all the way.

We liked Paw best of all because of her striking good looks, bearing, sensitivity and intelligence.

Imagine our chagrin, therefore, when Paw was eliminated some weeks ago! To us, her being voted out of the talent search indicated that there was something wrong with the quest's search process.

Well, a couple of weeks ago, the wrong was set right when, of all the show's "losers," Paw was given a second chance, and invited to rejoin the finals.

So, she can now move back all the way to the top, where she rightfully belongs. And she could emerge as the female comer to beat. In any case, in our estimation, she's already won.

ROSALES. He took a risky step.

Nickelodeon treats

NICKELODEON celebrates 2005 with new shows and surprises. Catch all the Nicktoons you can't get enough of on "Nick Mix," weekdays beginning Jan. 3. Check out why Arnold is scared to go back to school on "Hey Arnold" today.

See what happens when "Invader Zim" and "Spongebob SquareButs" take over Bikini Bottom on Jan. 8 and 9. Watch out for the latest pranks from Helga and Angelica on the third weekend of the month.

And catch these exciting new shows on the Nick Jr. Block: five high-spirited friends in "The Backyardigans," Holly and Kids in "Miss Spider's Sunny Patch Friends," and "Franklin," the irrepressible turtle.

Movies on TV

ON HBO today at 6 a.m., "Little Nikita." 12:45 p.m., "Stealing Harvard." 2:10 p.m. "The Nutty Professor." 5:15 p.m., "Life as A House." 9 p.m., "Sinbad."

On Cinemax today at 9 p.m., "Quicksand." 10:30 p.m., "The Life of David Gale."

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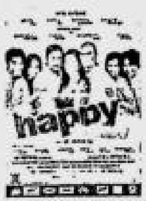
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5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
6 SIGAW
7 ENTENG KABISOTE
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5 LASTIKMAN
6 MANO PO 3
7 RESERVED
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2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
4 LASTIKMAN
5 AISHITE IMASU 1941
6 SIGAW

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OPENS JANUARY 6

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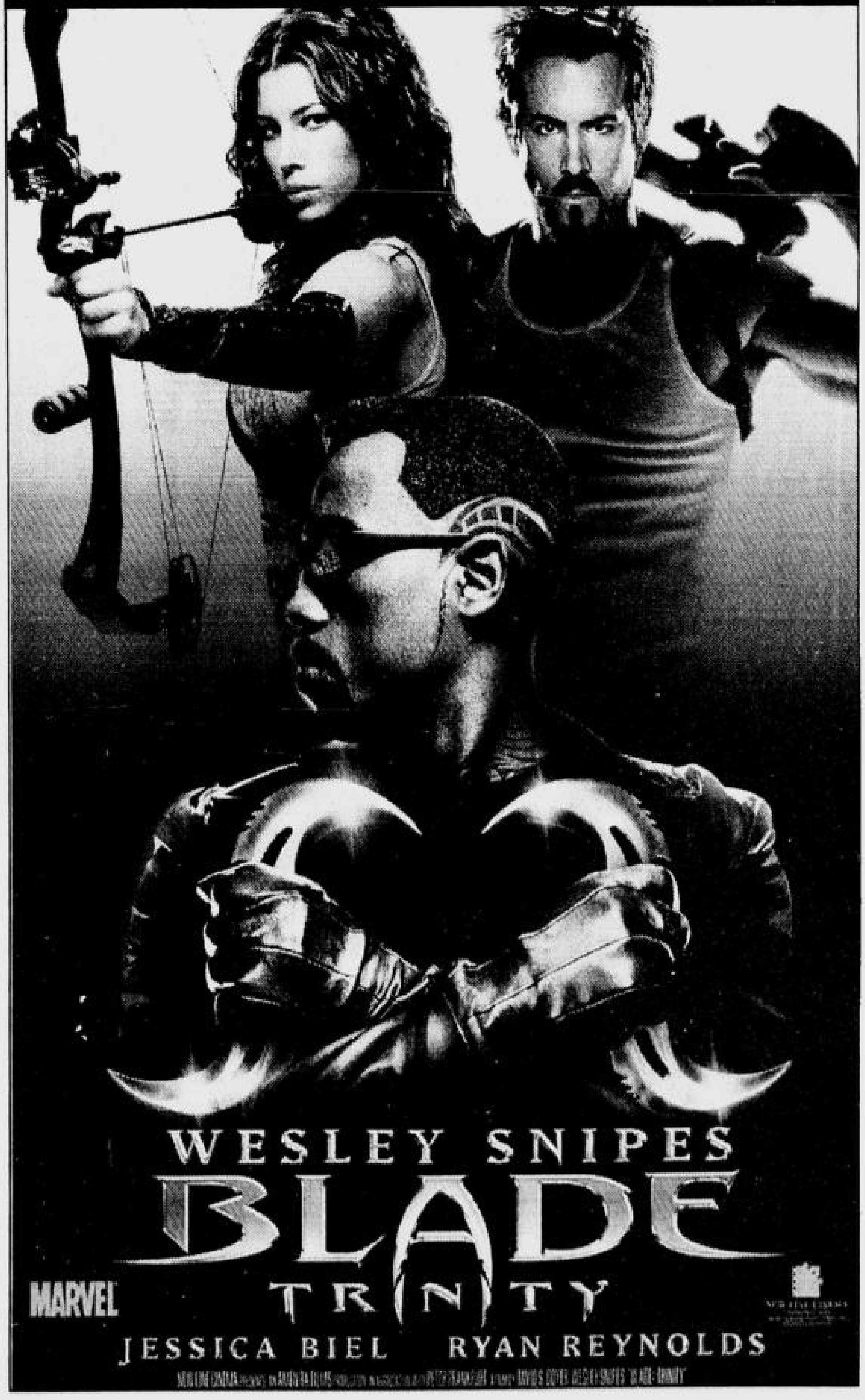

Young stars bring hope and cheer

(Conclusion)

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

EVERY year, scores of new talents try to make their mark in the highly crowded and competitive field of entertainment, but only a precious few manage to shine through.

This is because most newcomers are veritable clones of established stars, hewing close to the signature *tisoy* and teen-next-door hallmarks of the local TV and movie scene.

Yes, they're good-looking and cute, but so are hundreds of other hopefuls, so it's really hard to tell one starlet from another. Most of them look like they've come from the same mold, and they end up as a charming but faceless blur.

Thank goodness, there are some exceptions to this desultory rule, newcomers who stand out because they have enough original talent and temperament to buck the xerox mentality of local show biz.

In the ongoing Metro Manila film fest, the special find is young **Rebecca Lusterio,** who plays **Cesar Montano**'s younger sister in "Panaghoy sa Suba" with touching simplicity and truth, and an absolute lack of the usual, irritating show biz *porma*.

In "Panaghoy," Rebecca first makes a strong impression on viewers as she helps Cesar write a love letter to the character played by **Juliana Palermo.**

Rebecca may not be a *tisay* beauty, but her performance is so affecting that she is truly beautiful.

Even better, she looks very Filipina, so her "native" kind of beauty is especially wonderful to behold, in an industry so full of irrelevantly foreign types.

Best of all, Rebecca is a sensitive actress, whose simplest look speaks volumes of the rich inner life that her character is experiencing.

We hope that Rebecca's performance impresses other producers, so we'll see more of her on the big and small screens in the months to come.

And we trust that, as she becomes more popular, Rebecca won't be tainted by the local entertainment scene's glitz and gloss, and will give us more portrayals that evince and embody the best of the Filipino soul.

We would also like to cite **Jericho Rosales** for his intense performance in "Santa Santita." It

YOUNG/ A26

LUSTERIO with co-star Daria Ramirez. Her performance is so affecting that she is truly beautiful.

OPENS JANUARY 12, 2005
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Mark Gil
Jay Aquitania
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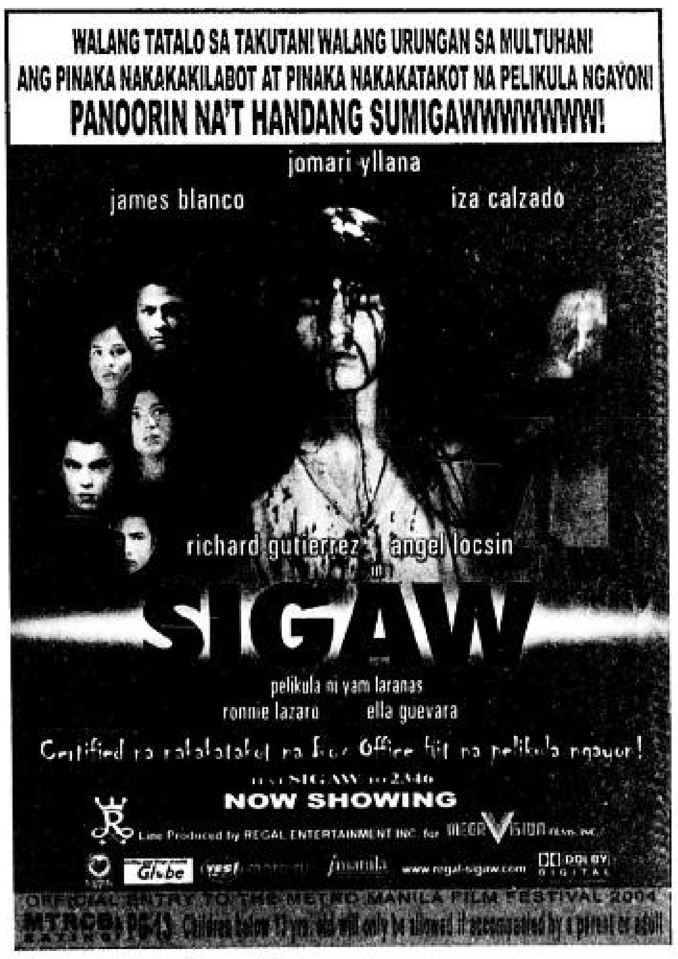
SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
DIRECTED BY JOSE JAVIER REYES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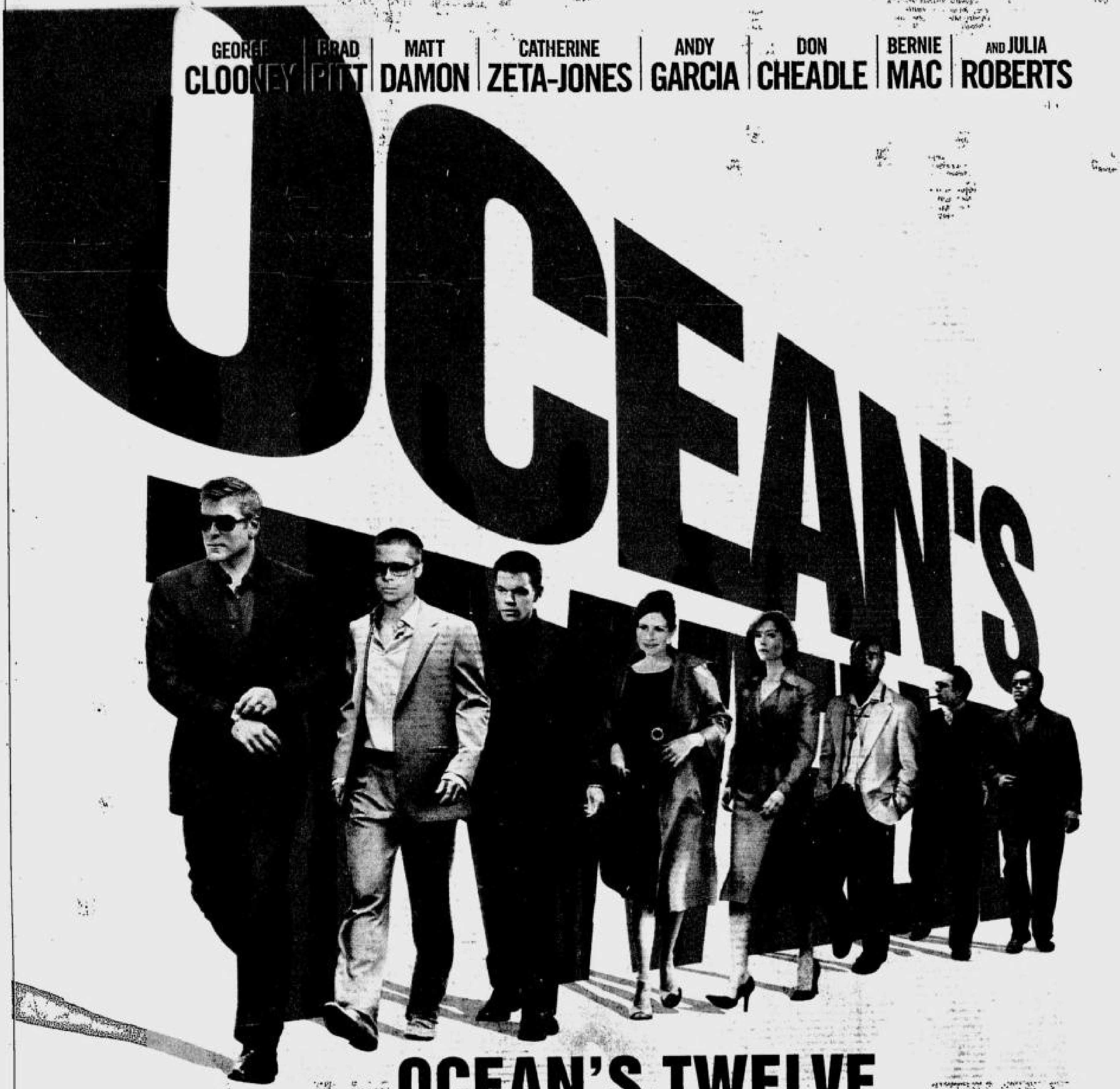

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Dream Dream Dream	Percy Faith and His Orchestra	dreamdream
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L' Appuntamento	Gianni Ferrio	appuntamento
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STORY OF O: Splitsville

RUDY ESPERAS

It was a sizzling year, it was a tragic year

By Nini Valera

CONTROVERSIES in 2004 made the entertainment scene sizzle, keeping a star-struck audience glued to entertainment news.

Despite a lackluster performance by local movies, which failed to jumpstart what continues to be described as a dying film industry, these controversies made us hold our collective breath, then gasp at revelations made by the stars themselves in print and on television.

Marital bliss

Screen goddess Assunta de Rossi and former Negros Oriental 1st District Rep. Jules Ledesma were married, again, at Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati, on March 14, and celebrated as man and wife in grand fashion at the Shangri-la Hotel in Makati. The wedding bash reportedly cost the multi-millionaire groom P8 million.

The couple's love survived the kidnapping of Jules' children Cristina and Julio Carlos (by his late first wife) and their eventual rescue through a "tried and tested" formula, a barrage of attacks from Assunta's younger sister actress Alessandra de Rossi and their eventual making up, and general speculation that the marriage was doomed from the start.

But the feisty Jules hung on to the love of his life and on the eve of their wedding declared to INQUIRER Entertainment that "heck, it could be love."

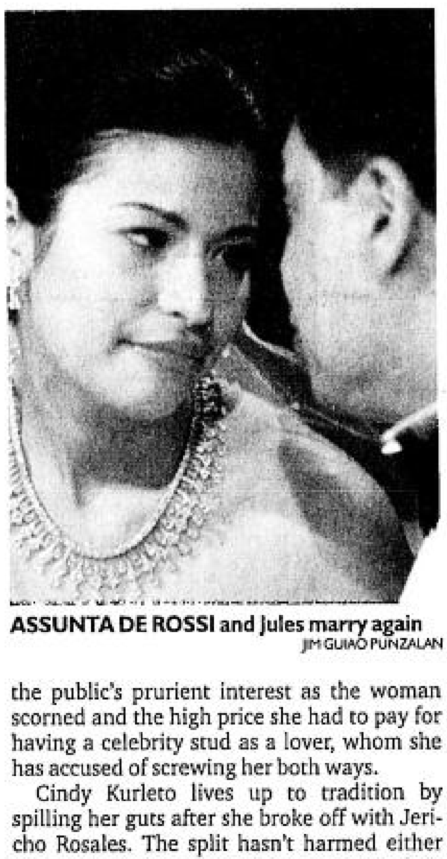
The grandeur of the Ledesma-De Rossi nuptials made the wedding of Tonton Gutierrez and Glydel Mercado held about a week later practically a non-event.

Whispers of the alleged civil wedding of Kristine Hermosa and Diether Ocampo in Jaen, Nueva Ecija last September became a loud buzz in December. But the wedding has yet to be confirmed. It's the couple's silence that makes this coupling controversial even if it's a dead issue by now. We're not holding our breath for their official announcement.

Breaking up

A P15-million estafa case filed by spurned businesswoman Cristina Castillo Decena against former lover Phillip Salvador on Feb. 26 is 2004's curtain raiser for show biz splits.

Salvador, a former lover of Kris Aquino with whom he has a son, Joshua, has deflected Decena's accusations by simply not being available for comment.



ASSUNTA DE ROSSI and Jules marry again

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Non-show biz denizen Decena captured the public's prurient interest as the woman scorned and the high price she had to pay for having a celebrity stud as a lover, whom she has accused of screwing her both ways.

Cindy Kurleto lives up to tradition by spilling her guts after she broke off with Jericho Rosales. The split hasn't harmed either party and merely served as a link to Jericho's love chain that is expected to grow longer as his star continues to rise.

The story of Osang (Rossana Roces) came full circle this year as her love life takes a hit. She split up with longtime live-in partner Tito Molina, who supposedly married her in spurious fashion based on a bogus annulment document from his previous wife, Fe Guarin Molina. Osang also accused Molina of living in the lap of luxury on her earnings as former bold star and lately as show biz talk show host.

The split is the bombshell's latest bombshell, which kept her in the limelight long after she announced that she's splitting show biz after her breakup with longtime manager Lolit Solis and best friend Dr. Vicki Belo over rumors that Osang's daughter Grace is pregnant by Jolo Revilla, Sen. Bong Revilla's son.

Osang's controversy-laden show biz existence could continue to sizzle next year as Grace gives birth to Jolo's son, whom Osang has named Leon.

For a while, longtime lovers Dolphy and ZsaZsa Padilla were the subject of a rumored breakup. But the couple's appearance in Fernando Poe Jr.'s wake dashed the talk, showing once again that perception is not necessarily a reality.

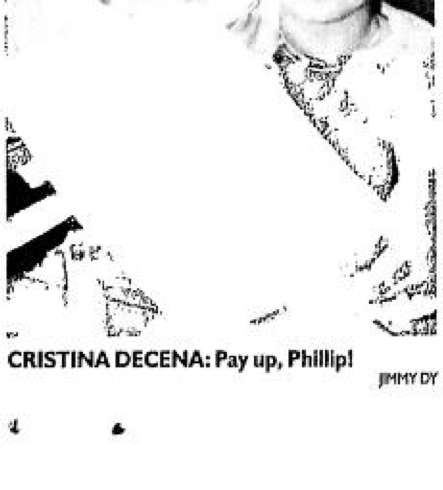
The most heartbreaking break-up was brought to you by Jomari Yllana and Ara Mina. Fighting long and hard for their relationship, which supposedly started before Jomari's marriage to Aiko Melendez was annulled, the couple looked like they were headed toward living happily ever after.

The stormy beginning of this affair mirrored its tumultuous ending, with Ara clueless on why Jomari dumped her, and Jomari brooding all the way to a show biz comeback.

Domestic disturbance

Kirby de Jesus was just another aspiring wannabe star courtesy of GMA 7's "StarStruck," except that he happens to be the son of former Hagibis member Bernie Fineza, who the boy said abandoned him and his siblings and their

IT WAS A SIZZLING/ A2-2



CRISTINA DECENA: Pay up, Phillip!

JIMMY DY

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NOV 16, 04 - 19 22 03 28 12 13 27
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week 2
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NOV 27, 04 - 11 10 15 18 25 17 29

week 3
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DEC 3, 04 - 26 18 24 29 30 07 11
DEC 4, 04 - 15 02 19 11 16 06 20

week 4
DEC 6, 04 - 23 03 25 02 12 27 17
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DEC 10, 04 - 24 04 14 26 10 19 29
DEC 11, 04 - 30 14 28 24 11 03 13

week 5
DEC 13, 04 - 08 23 16 03 26 02 17
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DEC 15, 04 - 13 14 01 16 21 17 07
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DEC 17, 04 - 07 13 02 28 17 23 06
DEC 18, 04 - 15 11 08 10 24 20 26

week 6
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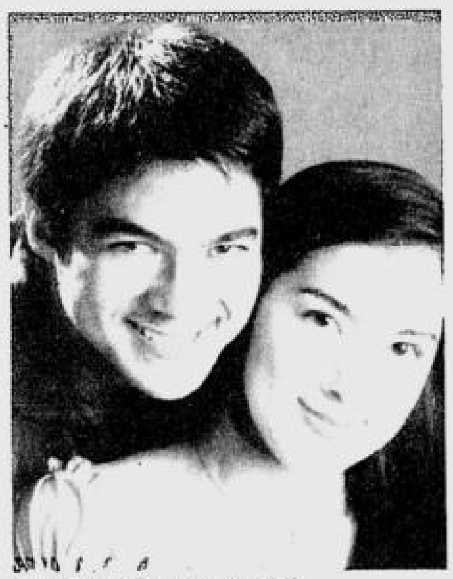
It was a sizzling year, it was a tragic year

DOLPHY and Zsa Zsa. Careless whispers



JOMARI and Ara. Aw, shucks!

From page A2-1

mother when they were younger.

Despite the ruckus created by the revelation, father and son have yet to come to terms with their relationship, and Kirby has so far survived the fierce competion on "StarStruck."

This domestic tussle was made even more significant when Sonny Parsons, self-proclaimed leader of Hagibis, walked into the fray with his tale of Bernie's alleged drug abuse, non-support for his then family, and delusions of grandeur long after the Village People clone has faded into obscurity.

In the case of the controversial Osang, past indiscretions with her leading men became current news when she blabbed on ABS CBN's "The Buzz" that she has had liaisons with the likes of Rudy Fernandez and Phillip Salvador and was made pregnant by "Feng Shui" cinematographer Neil Daza. These revelations disconcerted the equally flamboyant Kris Aquino, Phillip's former lover, who found herself in the hot seat while interviewing Osang.

Sex in the city

Her confession that she was an escort girl and that she had powerful politicians as sex partners made starlet Keanna Reeves a sensation—briefly.

Even if she refused to name names, Keanna's tales of torrid sex for pay with elected officials rocked Congress, triggered investigations that went nowhere and unraveled the secrets of sex trade syndicates, which also found their homes on the Internet.

Unfortunatel y, Keanna's true confessions also led to uncovering her real age—34—which by show biz standards is too old to be embarking on a fresh start as a sexy actress.

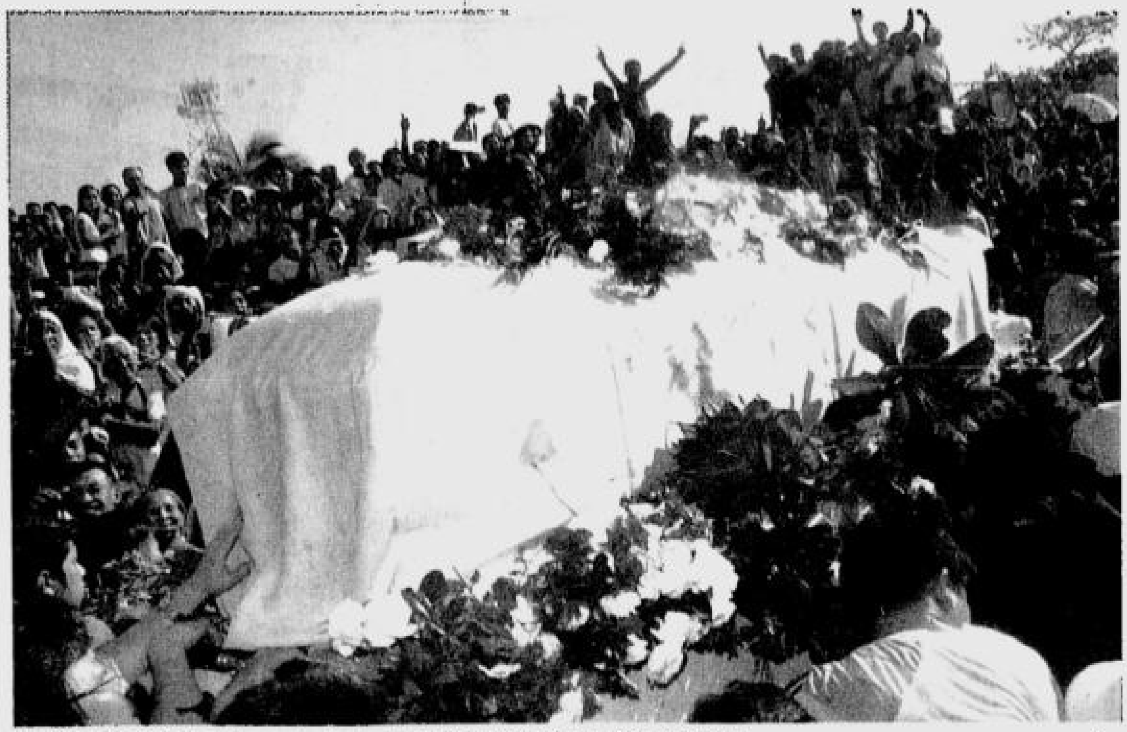
Last seen on "The Buzz" last Sunday apologizing to her manager Richard Hinola for naming him as one of her pimps, Keanna is bound for show biz oblivion where she continues to thrive in desperation.

But God forbid that Keanna should find herself wallowing again in a sordid existence in the sex trade. What's a girl with 38-C boobs to do?

Deaths

The passing of songwriter George Canseco last December marked the end of an era of original Pilipino music, which spawned hundreds of love songs culled from Canseco's colorful life. Giving INQUIRER Entertainment his last in-depth interview about seven weeks before he succumbed to liver cancer, Canseco reaffirmed his love of life, his status as songwriter of the times, and his reputation as lover of all times.

He will live "Ngayon at Kailanman" in the collective consciousness of at least two generations, who have claimed his music as the soundtrack of their life.



ROYAL SENDOFF for Fernando Poe Jr. clearly the year's biggest blockbuster

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

KIRBY DE JESUS, Son of Hagibis

Nothing can eclipse the blockbuster that was the sudden death of Fernando Poe Jr. created on Dec. 14. Show biz stood still when Da King died after suffering a stroke, two days before he was to celebrate his civil wedding anniversary with Susan Roces, whom he married 36 years ago.

At least two million FPJ supporters and diehard fans trooped to view his body at the Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City. Only in his death were his good deeds made public by the recipients of these good deeds, who credited him for paying for tuition fees and hospital bills, and for giving them the power to dream.

In FPJ's death, his widow Susan found her voice. She lashed at Da King's detractors, especially during the actor's presidential campaign and specifically at ABS CBN for what she described as the network's biased reporting of his political rallies. She vowed to continue his fight of proving in court that he was cheated in the last election and to carry on his good deeds.

FPJ loomed larger than.life even in death.

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VIVA CONCERTS & EVENTS

Jr Walker and the All Stars

Bodylicious

By Larry Leviste, *Contributor*
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

THE ULTIMATE stocking stuffer for a man this season is the December US edition of FHM that features Diana Zubiri as one of the Top 10 FHM choices in it's Sexiest Sights From Around the World.

Diana shares the honor with top-notch sex sirens from France, Russia, USA, Australia and Japan. Each photograph is marked by the model's flag. There are 27 FHM editions around the world.

Diana's photos were sent by FHM Indonesia. Unable to show you the glossy bodylicious spread, we are giving you Diana in made-to-measure couture by Goulee Gorospe.

In a brief but extra-hot write-up on our own Lady Diana, FHM interviews her.

FHM: You made a name in the Philippines for your sexy onscreen performance. Are you a vixen in real life?

Diana: People think I'm easy just because I portray sexy roles, but that is farthest from the truth. I am a very simple person with traditional values. You can find me playing badminton with my close friends and family. Badminton is the latest craze in the Philippines.

FHM: What is your secret to playing a hot scene?

Diana: Be prepared and think of passion. Kiss your partner slowly and close your eyes. It's hard, though. Could you kiss someone you don't love?

FHM: Never. What is your best feature?

Diana: My all-natural boobs.

Diana is now shooting Seiko Films' "Bikini Open." At 19, she is a regular attraction on the gag show "Bubble Gang" and the noontime show "Eat Bulaga," both on GMA 7.

She dreams of acting in a dramatic film and maybe winning an award.

"We must continue to have a goal, a dream," she says. "And someday I hope to deserve a reward for a job well done."

STYLED BY LARRY LEVISTE
FASHION BY GOULEE GOROSPE
MAKE-UP AND HAIR BY AGATHA OF SALON YSABEL

DIANA ZUBIRI times five is a slice of the spicy pie that is the Sexiest Sights Around the World, cooked up by FHM, US edition.

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Editor Louie C. Camino
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‘I don’t live in the past,’ Streisand tells Inquirer

SHE'S A "wild cat," husband James Brolin says.

By Ruben V. Nepales
LA Correspondent

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

LOS ANGELES—La Streisand is running late.

At first, they said that she would take only 20 minutes more. But it's been an hour since the press conference was supposed to have started. A number of the media people get up, head for the door, and threaten to leave.

A colleague, a former Miss Universe, entreats me to stay by saying, "But how often do you get a chance to meet and interview Barbra Streisand?" As if I needed cajoling. After all, she is the only singer-actress-director who has won all the top entertainment awards—Oscar, Golden Globe, Emmy. She is also considered the highest-selling female recording artist of all time.

A few weeks earlier, the superstar requested that she be interviewed along with Dustin Hoffman, who plays her husband, Bernie Focker, in the comedy "Meet the Fockers." In the end, she agreed to go solo, but on condition that no photos would be taken during the press con—only afterward, in a separate room, and not by our member-photographers, but by her own.

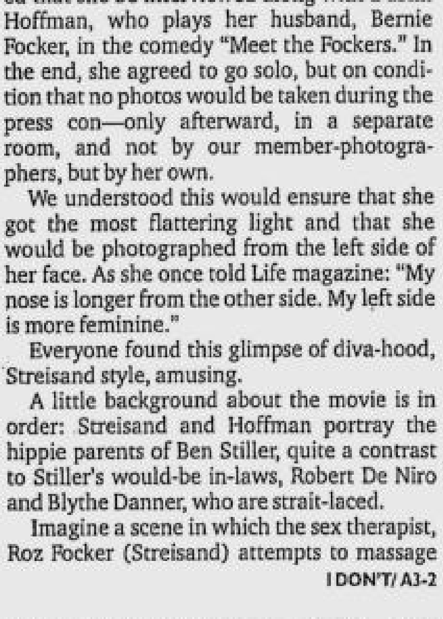
We understood this would ensure that she got the most flattering light and that she would be photographed from the left side of her face. As she once told Life magazine: "My nose is longer from the other side. My left side is more feminine."

Everyone found this glimpse of diva-hood, Streisand style, amusing.

A little background about the movie is in order: Streisand and Hoffman portray the hippie parents of Ben Stiller, quite a contrast to Stiller's would-be in-laws, Robert De Niro and Blythe Danner, who are strait-laced.

Imagine a scene in which the sex therapist, Roz Focker (Streisand) attempts to massage

I DON'T/ A3-2



STARSTRUCK author, the diva, and her dog

Lady's Choice
MAYONNAISE

CRISPY LIEMPO MAYO TWIST

THE NEW FRIED COMBO

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of fried liempo.

Dip it in Lady's Choice Mayonnaise.
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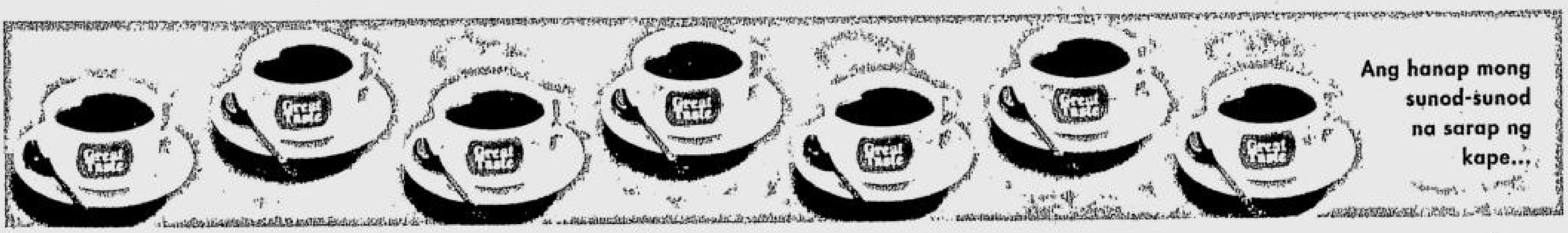
to bring out the real taste of fried food
without overpowering it.
Turn a traditional dish
into a new favorite.

The Friedelicious Dip!



Ang hanap mong
sunod-sunod
na sarap ng
kape...

‘I don’t live in the past,’ Streisand tells Inquirer

From page A3-1

the uptight Jack Byrnes (De Niro) who, incidentally, is one of the film producers. INQUIRER Entertainment got to ask these two giants about that scene. Despite its sterling cast, “Meet the Fockers” is strictly for laughs.

Earlier on this December afternoon at the Four Seasons—and in separate interviews—De Niro and Stiller also told us stories about La Streisand, who is now 62 years old.

De Niro: I’ve known Barbra for a long time. I must have met her for the first time about 25 years ago at a party. We’re friends but we hadn’t worked together until this movie, and we had a good time doing it. We have different ways of working. I think that was good for the dynamics of our relationship in the movie.

She’s not a Method actress (De Niro is). It’s more than Method. It’s just different. She was very sensible in her approach. She had good ideas about stuff, and in that (massage) scene, I was concerned that it should build up to a crescendo. I wanted it to build to a kind of climax, no pun intended, but . . . yes, pun intended (laughs).

Stiller: Barbra was very outgoing from the beginning. She invited all the cast over to her house for dinner a couple of times. She and her husband, Jim (James Brolin), they’re like the greatest couple in the world. They’re very different people, but they seem perfect for each other.

As I was getting to the point where I felt so comfortable with Barbra, there was a fundraiser for John Kerry where she was going to sing. We all went to watch her at the Disney Concert Hall. This was after we’d been shooting for four or five weeks and I was so used to just seeing her as Barbra, my mom in the movie, and then I go to this thing.

A full-on diva comes out and she gets a two-minute standing ovation before she even does anything. She looks and sings like Barbra Streisand and she’s not wearing the wig (a frizzy one in the movie; in real life, she has straight hair).

I was so glad that I didn’t have to work with her the next day.

It’s so funny to be able to ask her, like a friend, how often do you practice singing? And she goes, I hate to sing. I don’t like to sing. And just to hear her talk because she has little stories about everybody from Brando to Clinton. There are no airs about it at all.

Going to her house is this incredible crazy thing where you try to pretend like it’s normal to hear all these names and incredible experiences. I was blown away by how warm she is as a person.

Hoffman: I met Barbra when we were struggling actors, in 1960 at the Theatre Studio in New York. I started to go out with her roommate, Elaine, who said to me, you’ve got to hear her sing. I said, oh, please. Elaine said, no, she really has a great voice. I answered, oh, I’ve seen her act. She’s not that great (laughs). Elaine persisted and said, she’s going to be on television this Friday.

It was a local black-and-white show. Barbra was like 18 or 19 years old. And by the way, she slept on a cot that she had gotten from the thrift shop or an Army Navy Store. She didn’t have a dime and she goes on the “Mike Wallace Show.”

ROLLICKIN’ FUN. The freewheeling Fockers (couple on the left) meet the finicky Byrneses.

Barbra comes on. She sits on a stool, chewing what looks like five packs of gum in her mouth all at once. Mike asks her a few questions and he says, oh, you want to sing for us. She says, yeah. I remember thinking, God, she’s really laying on the New York thing, the accent. She takes this wad of gum out of her mouth and puts it under the stool (laughs). Remember, she was just a kid but when she opens her mouth, this blessing comes out and I remember I sat down, I got very emotional and I couldn’t believe it.

I love her. I swear this is what she was like the first 20 years of her life: Where did you get that? How did you pay for that? They gave you that free (laughs)? She’s still shopping for bargains.

When Streisand finally shows up an hour and a half late, all is immediately forgiven. She has an entourage of at least seven —including a woman on whose fur rug-covered lap sprawls Samantha, Streisand’s Coton de Tulear dog (a rare breed, we gather, and a wedding anniversary gift from Brolin); and a man whose sole job seems to be keeping an elevator door open and available (in case she decides to walk out?).

“It’s been a long time!” she calls out to a group that interviewed her in 1996. Then she goes straight to the side window and says, smiling, “Do you think we could close the inside curtain? Better lighting.” Everybody laughs. She closes it.

A colleague asks Barbra, only in jest, “Would you like to close the back one, too?” La Streisand coos, “Oh, look at that back light (laughter all around). Good idea.” And she closes that one, too.

Finally, she sits down and we take in the sight. La Streisand all in black, her blonde hair stylishly cut. I’ve always thought of her as sexy in a unique way, and in person, she lives up to that image. An exposed right shoulder, which seems to be a trademark, enhances that sensuousness. She speaks in a soft voice and often puts a finger on that famous nose.

After the press con, we move to a nearby room where her photographer has set up soft lighting. Barbra inquires about the Philippines as the photographer takes our picture with Samantha. The resulting photo you see on page A3-1 was taken from the left side, of course.

Please tell us about your marriage and the wonderful man you married.

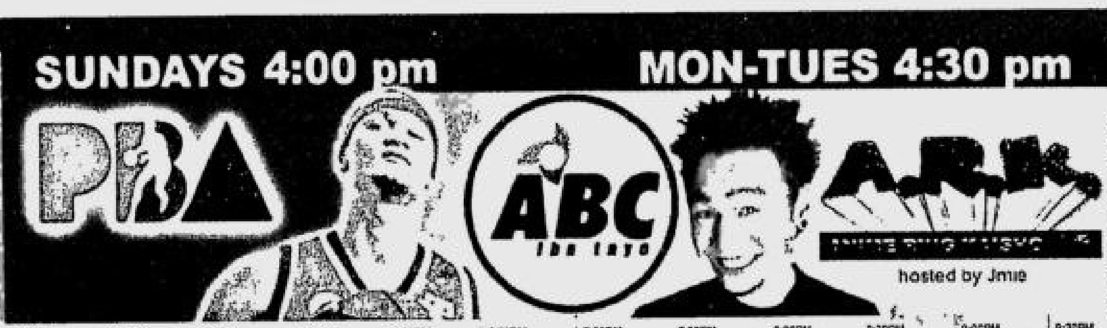
(Streisand laughs as she addresses a female colleague who asked the question). You just fell for his looks, didn’t you? We’re very compatible, shall we say. But we have to keep in check, too, in terms of watching that tone of voice . . . or maybe you don’t say everything. Years ago, I used truth as a weapon and just said, well, that’s the truth. But now it’s more in line with what the Dalai Lama says: truth with compassion. So then you don’t say dear, you look fat today. You say, I’ve seen you slimmer.

What are some of the things that you’d like to do more with your husband now that you’re in your 60s?

Well, we stay in bed a lot (laughter). We usually stay in bed Saturdays and we never get dressed; we stay in whatever we

I DON’T/ A3-3

SUNDAYS 4:00 pm
MON-TUES 4:30 pm



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Sunday, January 2, 2005

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2		SCQ Reload		The Buzz					Rated K		TV Patrol	Wansapanataym			Ang Tanging Ina		Sunday Family Cinema		
NBN		Value Vision						Go For Gold		Marconi Cup 2003				Gold & Glory In Grasco					Unlimited Diving
ABC 5		Ringside		PBA										Viva Cine Idols				ABC Onstage	
GMA 7	Gigstars	Love To Love			S-Files			Nats	Mel & Joey	Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho	All Star K		Daddy Di Do Du		Sunday Night Box Office				
RPN 9		Golf Power	Auto Extreme	Fistorama		Road Trip	Simple Life	Smackdown		Medical Investigation		CSI: Miami		Sunday's Big Event				The Working President	A Second Look
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network		Home Shopping Network		Pinoy Action Hits				Japan Video Topic		Iyo Ang Katarungan	EL SHADDAI		
Solar	Tough Enough	WWE Afterburn		WWE Smackdown				WWE Velocity		WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		Pride FC				Slamball	
Nickelodeon	Double Decker				Sabrina The Teenage Witch	Romeo	Girls In Love	My Dad The Rock Star	Drake & Josh	My Life As A Teenage Robot	SpongeBob SquarePants	Danny Phantom	All Grown Up	Double Decker				The Ren & Stimpy Show	The Wild Thornberrys
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Hit Chart				Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Dateline		Star Search		Meet My Folks		NBC Nightly News	What I Like About You	The O.C.		Girls Behaving Badly	Simple Life 2			Nip Tuck		Dateline	
Studio 23	OPM MYX Countdown	Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	Spotlight TV	Hotwire	Top Gear	Nonito: The Hidden Files		Survivor: Vanuatu		Two & A Half Men	Just Shoot Me	Will & Grace	F.	Digital Tour	Mutant X		
AXN			Money Train				Hollywood's Greatest Stunts	30 Seconds To Fame	30 Seconds To Fame	The Amazing Race		Fear Factor		CSI: Miami		The 4400		The Amazing Race	
Star World		My Big Fat Obnoxious Fiance		The Apprentice		Business Week Asia	Travel Asia	Smallville		The Simpsons	The Kumars At No 42	Oprah Prime Time		The X-Files		Enterprise		The Simpsons	Oprah Prime Time
CNN	Design 360	World News	International Correspondents	World News	The Daily Show John Stewart Global Edition	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News	Talk Asia	World News	People In The News	World News	The Daily Show John Stewart, Global Edition	Global Challenges	CNN Business Traveller	Talk Asia	World Sport
National Geographic	On Assignment	Innovation		Samsung Best Of The Week		Wild Horizons	Wild Orphans	Rolex Awards	From The Heart	Through The Lens		Megastructures		Secrets Unveiled		Innovation		Samsung Best Of The Week	
Solar Sports													NBA TV Daily						
Lifestyle Network		Ground Rules	Outer Spaces	Your Private Island	Breathing Room	Back To Basics	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Ciao America With Mario	Food Network Special		Modern Girl's Guide	TBA			Behind The Velvet Ropes		Planet Parent	Molto Mario
HBO			Dumb And Dumberer: When Harry Met Lloyd			Maximum Velocity (4:50 PM)			The Foreigner (6:25 PM)			Mission Impossible			Trapped (9:45 PM)				The Next Karate Kid
Star Movies		The 25th Hour				Reality Bites (5:15 PM)				Hart's War (6:55 PM)				Far From Heaven				Hannibal (10:50PM)	
Cartoon Network	Dynomutt, Dog Wonder	New Scooby & Scrappy-Doo	The Detective Squad	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	X-Men Evolution	The Powerpuff Girls	Atomic Betty	Xiaolin Showdown	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	TBA			Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Wild Force	Zoids: Fuzors	Time Squad	Duck Dodgers	Xiaolin Showdown
ESPN				2004-05 Big 12 Conf Basketball- Gnzga vs Missouri				NFL Football - Eagles vs. Rams				World Pool League '04 Warsaw, Poland 2004 Int'l Chall of Champs Unc. CT USA World Pool Masters '04 Ann Zee, Holland							
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina's Secret Life	Lion King's Timon & Pumbaa	Quack Pack	Viva S Club	Martin Mystery/ That's So Raven/ Dave The Barbarian/Phil Of The Future				Lizzie Mcguire	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			Internal Affairs				Milk Money			In Pursuit of Honor (7:15PM)				The One			The People Vs. Larry Flynt		
Hallmark Channel		Grownups				My Sister's Keeper		Jasper, Texas				Five Days To Midnight			A Carol Christmas				
Discovery Channel		Full Metal Challenge		Science Mysteries		Rides		Mythbusters		Hour Asia				Discovery Sunday				Power Zone	
MTV Philippines		Non-Stop Hits		MTV Brand New	Wildboyz	The Assistant	MTV Jams	Non-Stop Hits		Room Raiders	Punk'D	Non-Stop Hits	Newlyweds	World Chart Express	Pimp My Ride	Top 10 Favourite Videos		VH1 Behind The Music	
Sports Plus		NFL						Davis Cup Finals Spain vs USA				Raceworld		Get A Grip	Slipstream		WTA Seat Open Finals		Inside the PGA
EWTN	St. Catherine Of Sienna	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Pope Pius XII	Children's Rosary	Faith Factory	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Octavia Dies	EWTN Bookmark	A Christian Pilgrimage To Jordan	EWTN Global Showcase		The Way To Follow Jesus	St. Matthew	Sunday Mass			Life Is Worth Living	Mother Angelica Live Classics	

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WINNERS ALL. Best actress Vilma Santos flanked by best director Cesar Montano and best actor Christopher de Leon.

FOR FPJ, sister Elizabeth Poe accepts the posthumous "Idolo ng Masa" award.

MOTHER WINS, and weeps. Mother Lily Monteverde (with daughter Roselle at left), producer of best picture, says she keeps on producing movies because of her love for the industry. PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

BEST DIRECTOR'S Sunshine, who is also "Panaghoy" line producer, accepts award for best supporting actress Rebecca Lusterio.

Not 1 award for 2 box-office moneymakers

By Marinel R. Cruz

REGAL Films may well be celebrating over the box-office showing of its Metro Manila Film Festival entry "So Happy Together," but it has no reason to celebrate over the same movie's performance in the film fest awards show Wednesday night.

"So Happy Together" did not win one of the 20 awards handed out at the Aliw Theater in Pasay City. Even director Joel Lamangan, who also megged "Aishite Imasu 1941" and "Mano Po 3," failed to snatch the best director trophy from winner Cesar Montano.

"So Happy Together" ranked third in the box-office standing, according to a film fest insider.

Canary Film's "Spirit of the Glass" also failed to bring home any award. In box-office earnings, it is said to rank second to OctoArts Films' "Enteng Kabisote: Okay Ka Fairy Ko . . . The Legend," this year's top-grosser.

This year's winners are:

Vilma Santos ("Mano Po 3: My Love"), best actress; Christopher de Leon ("Mano Po 3: My Love"), best actor; Cesar Montano ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), best director; Rebecca Lusterio ("Panaghoy sa Suba"), best supporting actress; Dennis Trillo ("Aishite Imasu 1941"), best supporting actor; Ella Guevara ("Sigaw"), best child performer; Alex Vicencio ("Enteng Kabisote: Okay Ka Fairy Ko . . . The Legend"), best make-up artist;

Best story, Roy Iglesias, "Mano Po 3: My Love"; Best float, "Mano Po 3: My Love"; best production design, Rodell Cruz, "Mano Po 3: My Love"; best visual effects, Roadrunner Network Inc., "Mars Ravelo's Lastikman"; best screenplay, Cris Vertido, "Panaghoy sa Suba"; best cinematography, Ely Cruz, "Panaghoy sa Suba".

Best editing, Manny Dayrit, "Sigaw"; most gender-sensitive film, "Aishite Imasu 1941"; best musical score, Nonong Buencamino, "Panaghoy sa Suba"; best sound recording, Arnold Reodica, "Sigaw"; best theme song, "Pagbigyan ang Puso Ko," performers Karylle and Jerome John Hughes, "Mano Po 3: My Love.".

STAR FOR ALL SEASONS. Vilma is also Star of the Night.

'I don't live in the past,' Streisand tells Inquirer

From page A3-2

slept in. Then we go down to the kitchen. There's nobody around us, just our little dog, except if his daughter is visiting or my son has just been there and it's the best time. We watch movies. I write or draw. We like to do a lot of just hanging around. Sometimes I feel guilty and then I say, wait a minute, I've been working since I was 11 so what do I feel guilty about? No, this is okay, to do nothing, rest and play. We go to the movies a lot and we travel. We love boats, so we take boat trips.

When I was younger, I had much more ambition. I wanted to do this and win that award and direct and yuck, yuck, yuck, you know. Now it's time to take it easy, to relax, have fun.

I love antique-ing. I'd like to get a U-Haul truck and take a trip down the East Coast to find great American antiques.

Can you elaborate on what you said, that you draw?

I've started to paint. I got a little easel and started to sketch and I thought that was very meditative and quieting.

What else do you do to quiet down?

Well, I have family, friends, and a dog that I love. I'm building a house. It's an escape into another chaotic world but it is an escape from this one (laughter). I'm designing a lot. I design my clothes, house and furniture. I could spend 10 hours a day drawing, designing and coloring.

Does it still bother you that you are sometimes misunderstood?

I think it matters less and less to me (laughs). One of the things that I've learned . . . is not to take things personally. It helps to understand that people have their own regrets, things they wish they had done with their lives and it really helps to let go of certain feelings.

You've had a very interesting and full life. What philosophy guided you?

On that one, you're going to have to wait to read the book that I will write. I've actually written only the first chapter on why I hate lies. What is my philosophy? Let go, let God. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Love thy neighbor as thyself. They're the kind of basic religious, philosophical thoughts that I think are still true today.

You are an icon to many people. It seems that even as a young girl, you already knew the power of control. Where did the confidence to speak your mind come from?

I think it was from lack of discipline. My husband sometimes says I'm like a wild child because I wasn't taught manners. My family never had meals together. We never had conversations. I would eat over a pot. I would sit with my leg up at the table. My friend, Donna Karan, eats with her leg up (laughter). She drives the car with one leg up. People do have soul connections. Maybe it's this leg up thing (laughter).

Where did the confidence come from? There's also genetics. My father was an extraordinary man or so I've read, since I didn't know him. He died when I was 15 months old. But I read about him in the book "Leaders of Great Education." He taught prisoners, and juvenile delinquents in a reformatory. I read his thesis examining behavior in 1933. He wrote poetry and designed photo albums. I find myself becoming more and more like him, and yet I never knew him.

Can you tell us about the album that you are planning?

Barry Gibb is writing another album for me. I did that "Guilty" album with him (1980) and we decided to work together again. He's written one song for this new one and now he's working on others. I'd like to do a Brazilian album someday and I like this idea of doing ethnic songs from around the world. That would be great. But I love things that happen in private. I am not a person who really likes to be onstage. That's why I never went back to the theater. I like recording the best because they're private. You don't have to worry about how you look and you can schlock around, be comfortable.

Since this movie deals with meeting the in-laws, how was your first meeting with your husband's family?

It was fun and they were so surprised. I wore a baggy sweater and put my feet up. I don't know what people expect when they meet celebrities, like you're going to come in on a high horse and (laughter) with a crown on your head and a mink coat and an entourage. I enjoy privacy and small things—staying home, seeing a couple of people.

I really don't like the fanfare of being a star. Thought I did, but then when it happened and I was with Marty Erlichman (her manager) at the opening of "Hello, Dolly!" all of a sudden I turned around, he had blood running down his nose. Who's going to like that? It's not all that it's cracked up to be. But the process of work is great.

How do you feel about opportunities for professional women in Hollywood?

I'm a homebody. I don't really know what's going on in the Hollywood community. I know things are getting better for African-Americans. I remember my friend, Marcia Brandwynne, who was an anchor on TV and she was let go because she looked too ethnic. Now, one doesn't even pay attention to the race of an anchorperson.

I would think that ever since I directed "Yentl," things have gotten much better because now, you don't say, oh, it's a woman director. But I made a film in eight years.

What brought you back in front of the cameras?

Ben (Stiller) called me from London and there was Jay (Roach, the director) saying, please. And all I could think of was, can I really do it? Because I like to sleep late . . . and stay in bed the next morning. For this movie I had to get up at five. That is not cute (laughter). But when I do get up early, by noon I have accomplished so much that it is kind of great—though it's not my natural rhythm.

So did you have fun acting again?

What is fun? Fun is the creative process, discovering a character. For me, the fun part was working with the actors and the director because the director was so open to ideas and suggestions and our playing around and improvising and yet he held us in check. It was fun not to have to worry about every single part of the movie, like when you direct. It was fun to be working with my contemporaries.

How much do you have in common with your character, Roz Focker?

That's not me. I am not comfortable with that kind of openness. But one thing we do have in common is that we have an appreciation of love and sex in the later stages of life.

How did it feel to be on top of Robert De Niro while massaging him?

It hurt (laughter). I worked it out with my own masseuse the night before how I could choreograph the scene. I was doing this thing with my elbow on Bobby and he kept saying, press harder, press harder. My thumbs gave out a bit. I got tendonitis and had to wear a brace. But it was fun. Bobby's just so good to work with.

Would you like to direct again?

I'd like to direct a movie without acting in it. That would be a breeze.

Are you at peace with yourself?

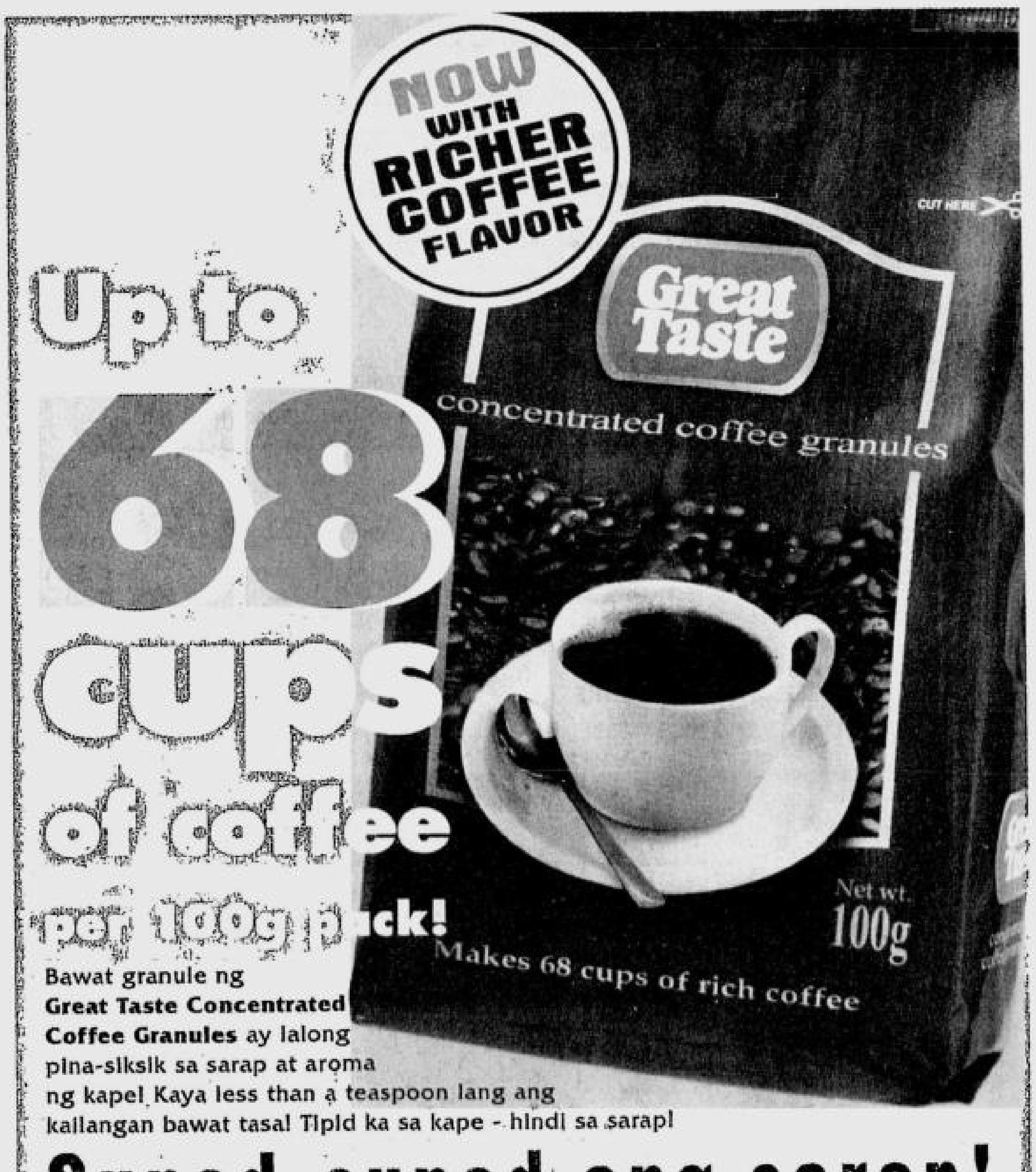
Yes. One great thing about aging is, you see life as it is and know how to be your authentic self.

Do you ever watch your old movies? You were fantastic in some of them.

I can't remember them. Someone was talking to me once about the opening scene of "Hello, Dolly," and I had no recollection of it.

You don't watch your old movies at all?

No. I don't want to live in the past yet. I like living in the present.



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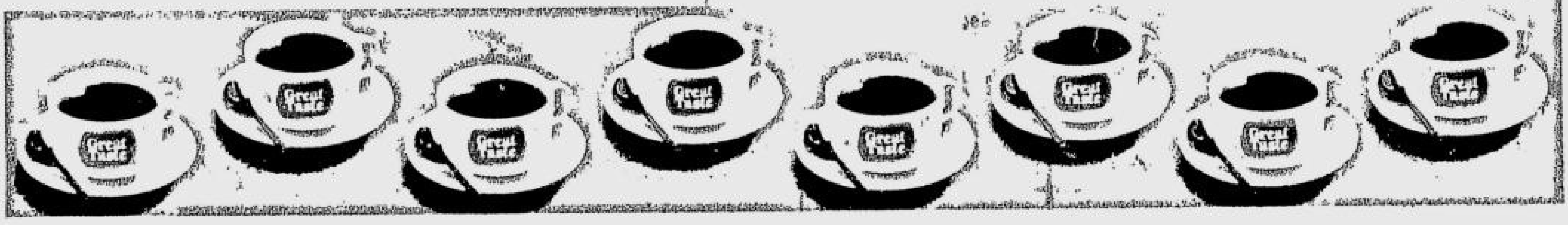

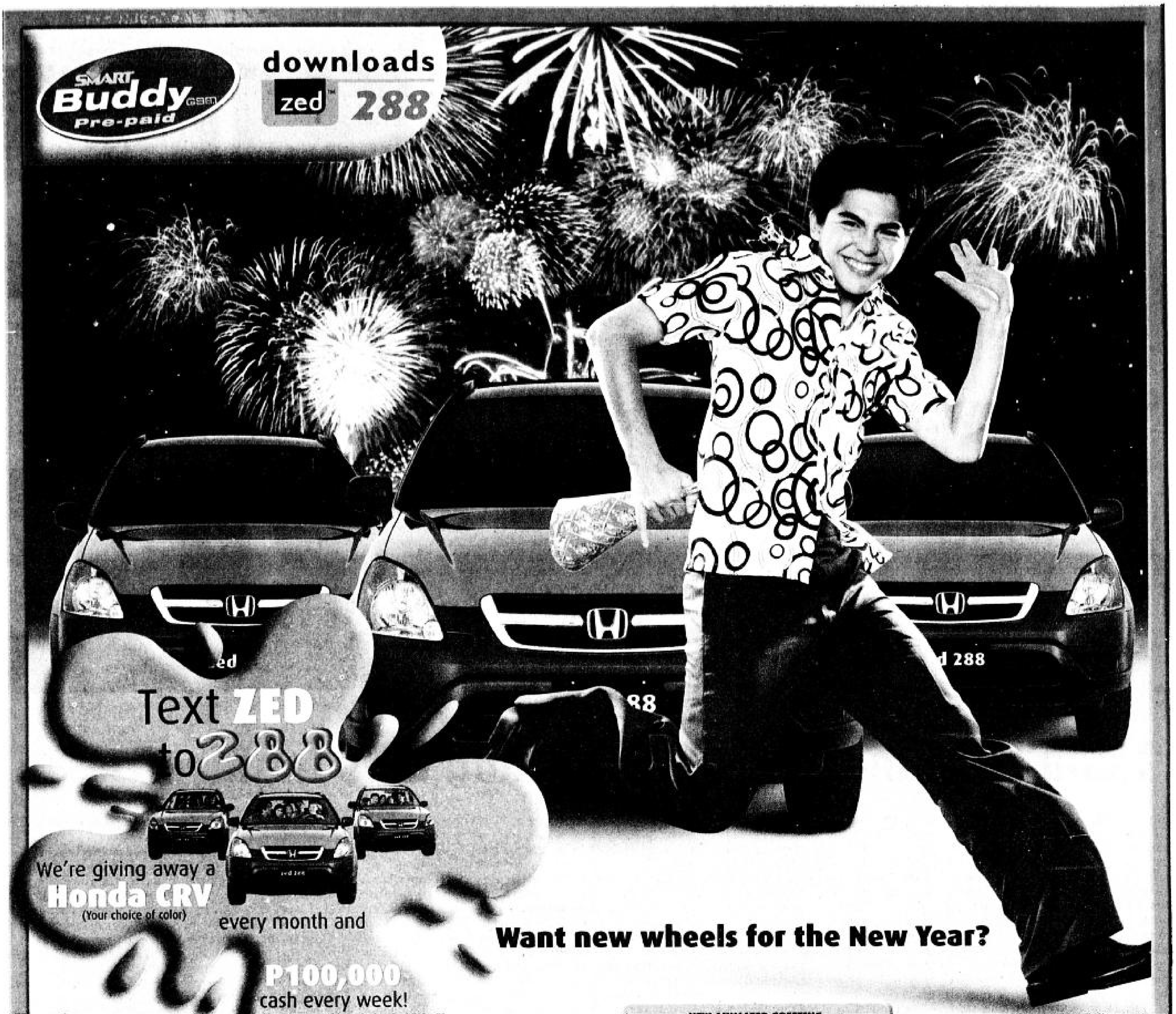
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Choopeta	*T-Rio*	**CHOOPETA**
Rumors	*Lindsay Lohan*	**RUMORS**
Shine	*Regine Velasquez*	**SHINE**
Moonshadow	*Mandy Moore*	**MSHADOW**
My Prerogative	*Britney Spears*	**MYPREROG**
These Words	*Natasha Bedingfield*	**THESEWORDS**
Hold Me Now	*Wayne Wonder*	**HOLDMENOW**
Dancing In The Street	*David Bowie*	**DANCING1**
If You Leave Me Now	*T-Rio*	**IFULEAVE**
How Could You Say You Love Me	*Sarah Geronimo*	**HOWCOULDU**
I'd Rather	*Luther Vandross*	**IDRATHER**
My Happy Ending	*Avril Lavigne*	**HAPPYEND**
Sunday Morning	*Maroon 5*	**SUNDAYMORN**
Decoration	*Jerry Yan*	**DECORATION**
Liwanag Sa Dilim	*Rivermaya*	**LIWANAG**

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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Simple starts for some of RP's top execs

FIRST Job is one of the most popular series of the INQUIRER's Business Features Section. We present to you a summary of the first jobs of the executives we featured in 2004 to make all of us realize that many successful people started simply enough. *M.Q. Espino*

Tony Tan Caktiong

Founder of Jollibee Foods Corp.

TONY Tan's first job was helping out in the Chinese restaurant his father set up in Davao. He recalls they made more mess than help but the lessons learned were priceless.

TAN-CAKTIONG

Ricardo Tan

President and CEO of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp.

AS A TEENAGER, Ric would wake up at 4 a.m. to pick up the San Francisco Chronicle, fold the paper and for an hour deliver these to 100 houses. He received 50 US cents a week, which at that time could buy a Hershey bar for five cents and tide one over for a simple date. He earned $100 a month.

AMARANTE

Arlene Aran-Amarante

Country head, Motorola Philippines

ARLENE moved out of her family's house at 18 and worked at McDonald's for P15 an hour hosting birthday parties and catering for businesses.

SYCIP

Washington SyCip

Founder SGV & Co.

WHILE waiting for the results of the board exams for accounting, he taught at the University of Sto. Tomas. He was only 17-and-a-half years old and was younger than all of his students.

GOSIENGFIAO

Rolando P. Gosiengfiao

CEO of Hong Kong based GenRx Holdings Ltd., which owns the chains of Healthway Clinics in the Philippines

ROLLY, grew up in Kamuning where "every boy was an entrepreneur. So I have done my bit as a newspaper boy every Sunday for three years, a *tinapay* vendor every afternoon for two years."

LAYA

Jaime Laya

Founder KPMG Laya Mananghaya and Co.

LAYA was a college instructor for two decades before joining the administration of President Ferdinand Marcos. His first pay was P245—quite a big sum in 1957 when minimum wages were P4 a day only.

George T. Siy

Eldest son of the Siy family which owns Fil-Pacific Apparel, makers of Jag and Lee jeans, Kenny Rogers, Seattle's Best, Marie-France, Facial Care Centers, Svenson

SIY and his brother were tasked to work in the factory floors of his father's garments' factory during summers. George would fix the thread used for weaving textile. They were not paid but were given free lunches.

VERGEL

Adelita Aquino-Vergel de Dios

Chair of Malayan Insurance Co. Inc.

BOTH an accountant and a Business Administration graduate, Adelita joined the business world at 19 as a posting clerk for the Filipino Merchant's Insurance Co.

FOJAS

Danila Regina 'Lala' Fojas

GM of Shangri-la Plaza Mall

LALA got married at 17 and had two kids by 20. She finished speech and drama and was a speech therapist for children with cerebral palsy. She got P400 a month and their house rent was P200.

Willy Ocier

Chair of Belle Corp., owner and developer of Tagaytay Highlands

WILLY was the COO of the "Binondo Central Bank" of the '80s. This was the black market for dollars. His office was in a posh subdivision in Makati and suitcases of dollars would go in and out of his house daily.

Anna Maria Tanghanco

Owner of Taters snack shop

HER entrepreneurial spirit and creativity were kept in check for years because she comes from a

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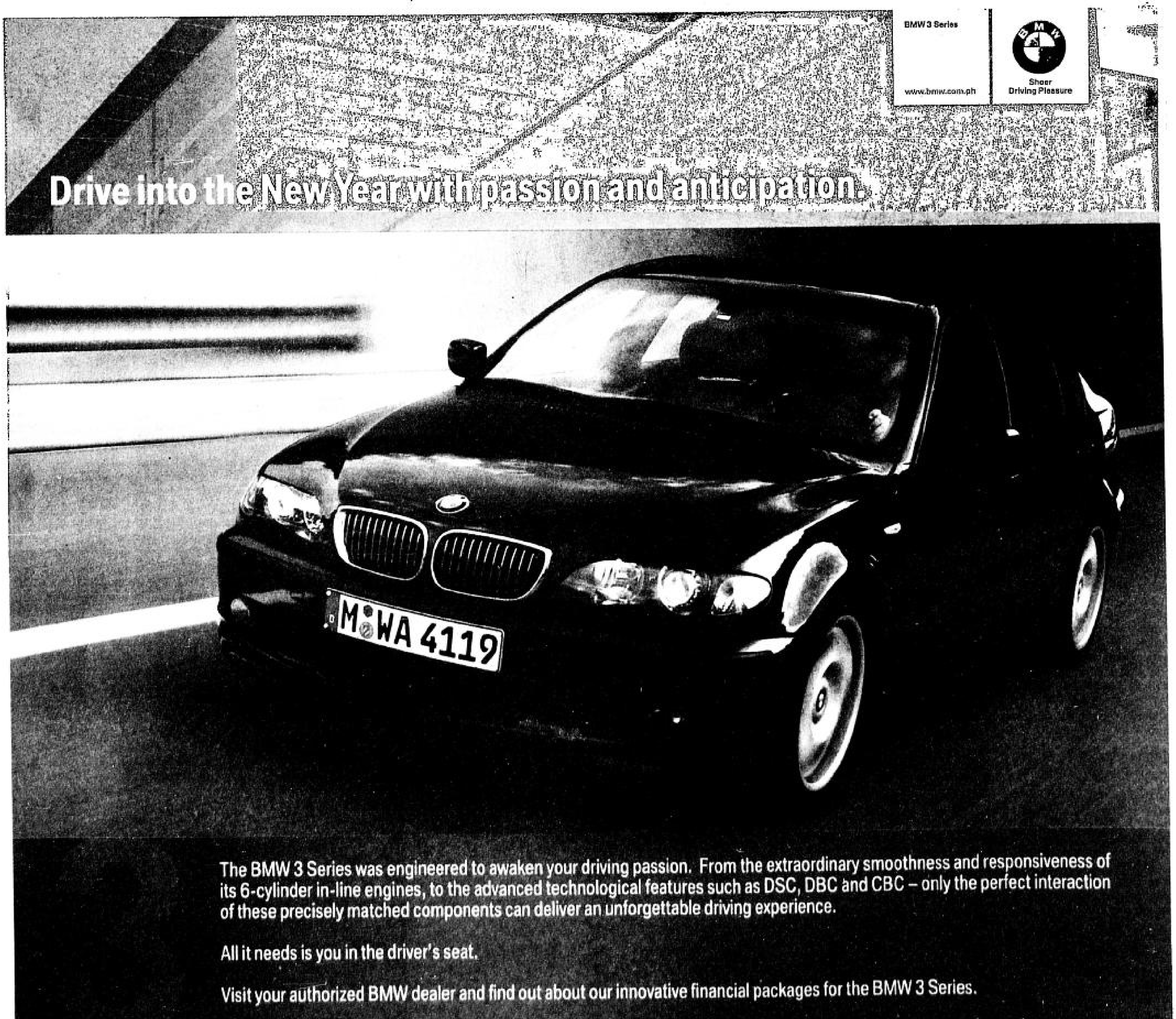
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Ex-maid turned farmer tops rice yield in Pangasinan

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—Rosalie Ellasus, a former maid and a marketing executive in Singapore, did not mind getting her hands dirty and her feet muddy when working in her farm here. The hard work that Ellasus, 44, gave to her farm paid off when she was cited as the province's highest palay yielder recently.

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Gov. Victor Agbayani chose Ellasus cooperative as one of the core cooperatives that benefit from the provincial government's Grains Marketing Assistance Program (GMAP).

The cooperative also benefits from Agbayani's program on irrigation and support for farm machineries like water pumps and threshers.

Women members

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Ellasus is chair of her town's agricultural and fishery council, the Federation of the Corn Growers of Pangasinan and the Ilocos region's PhilMais. She is also a member of the national board of PhilMais.

A graduate of medical technology, Ellasus started her "affair" with agriculture only five years ago.

She had lived and worked abroad—in Singapore from 1987 to 1988 as a domestic helper, in Canada where she studied tourism and sales management from 1988 to 1991 and back in Singapore from 1991 to 1998 as a marketing executive of a construction supply.

Back to RP

But she decided to return to the Philippines in 1998, three years after her husband died. "Nobody was minding my three children and I thought it was time to go home," she says.

Ellasus invested a part of her savings on two passenger jeepneys.

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After her training, she shifted to planting hybrid palay and hybrid corn.

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Since 1998, Ellasus was able to buy more rice land and is now tilling five hectares. But not all are devoted to rice because some portions are in low-lying areas and are not fit for the hybrid variety.

"Do your farming scientifically, do not get tenants but be a hands-on farmer, and do not spend all your earnings but invest some so it can earn more," says Ellasus.

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Aside from their members, Lopez says the cooperative helps three "service cooperatives" that have no access to the National Food Authority for their marketing needs. On their own, farmers are at the mercy of rice traders.

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Simple starts for some ...

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YAP

Josephine Gotianun-Yap

President of Filinvest Dev't Corp.

LIKE many typical Chinese businesses, Joji's family lived on the second floor while the first floor was the office. "As a child I used to help out. My jobs ranged from sticking stamps in the envelopes, acting as a messenger, bringing papers to the different staff from my mom, counting coins for the cashiers and doing new accounts teller work in my teens."

Raymund Miranda

Managing director of Walt Disney Television International

RAYMUND is a naturally curious person and this was what helped propel him to the top. He wanted to be a doctor but his passion for the stage drew him to the theater and eventually mass communications. He started his career as a disc jockey and eventually moved to production.

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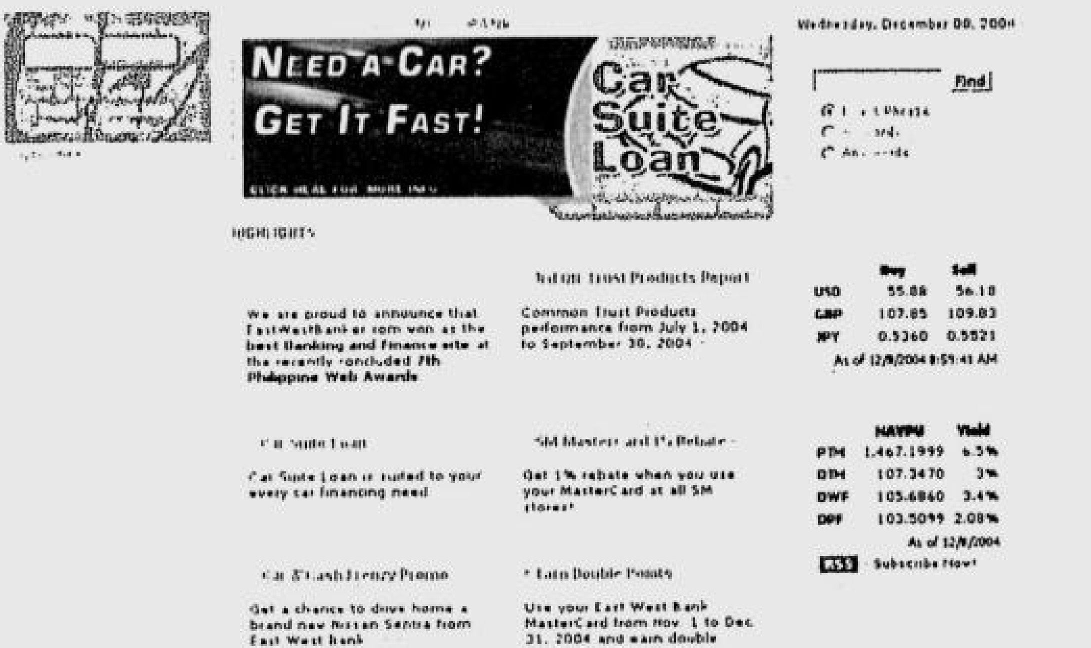

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	NAVPU	Yield
PTM	1,467.1999	6.5%
DTM	107.3470	3%
DWF	105.6860	3.4%
DPF	103.5099	2.08%

As of 12/8/2004

THE WINNING site

East West Bank's website is No. 1

EAST West Bank Corp. recently reigned supreme in the world of information superhighway as it won the best website award under the Banking and Finance category for its colorful, fully functional and user-friendly website—www.eastwestbanker.com.

The award was given during the 7th Philippine Web Awards, the country's most prestigious award giving body for the internet community.

The banking and finance category is for those sites that facilitate banking, investing and financial transactions online. Sites in this category include online banking, bills presentment and payment, financial calculators, stock trading, currency trading and insurance quotes.

What made the victory sweeter for East West Bank's web development team, led by Karl Reyes, was the bank already captured the major award only on its 3rd year of participation. East West Bank's web development team is headed by Karl Reyes.

"We joined in 2002 because we wanted our site evaluated but we were happy to become a finalist in our first try. To be a finalist, you will go through a process of elimination. But this year, it was our goal to win and we hit the target," Reyes said.

Reyes said his team was given due recognition because they work hard to make the East West Bank website better every year. "It's an honor for us because we were judged against everyone else in the industry."

Judges included prominent media practitioners, web developers, artists, editors and other experts in the IT and multimedia industry.

"What is truly extraordinary is that this is a homegrown developed system so internally we have control of the design and features. What we try to do is to keep the website dynamic and exciting. Every year, we change the design," Reyes pointed out.

This year, the contest had the theme "Urban Jungle," taking the organizers to the gritty mean streets that capture the havoc and humor of the Pinoy culture. The entries were judged on the following criteria: content, design, usability and functionality.

Content is important because a site must not only be flashy but it must have the images, multimedia elements and links that serve the purpose for which the site was created. In design, the site must be visually appealing through the creative of colors, images and space.

The site must also be usable, directing the user through the use of the site effortlessly. Finally, the site must be functional; that is, it is fully interactive so the user can get optimum use of the site.

"East West Bank's website boasts of eye-catching presentation and fusion of dazzling yet elegant colors of blue, red and yellow, together with its easy-to-navigate links and usable and informative content. What we did was to adapt to all browsers as much as possible, Reyes said.

The East West Bank website has all the information that the suppliers need. With just a few clicks, the user can easily access the bank's products and services. The web even features a branch locator window, the first of its kind, for the user's convenience.

Customers can also pay their bills online like Meralco, Maynilad Water, SkyCable, Home Cable, Smart, Globe, Sun Cellular, SSS, Pag-ibig and selected credit cards.

Most importantly, the website is seriously considered as a way to communicate with the bank's customers.

The site receives an average of 50 e-mails daily and Reyes' team makes sure these are adequately responded to. The e-mails involve a range of issues including some complaints, which are immediately sent to the branch concerned. If a reply is not received, Reyes himself calls up the branch.

The web development team is focused on improving the site. The site is regularly updated to reflect the changes in the company such as new products, change in rates, new branch openings and more.

But at the end of the day, the team doesn't take everything so seriously. "We make constructive criticisms, which are very light. I make sure that everyone of us will come up with our own findings, concerns and contributions and we trust each other's ideas," Reyes emphasized.

With East West Bank's breaking into the winner's circle, the team is challenged now more than ever to come up with a site that lives up to its billing. "We are more challenged now to meet customers' demands. The public can expect more improvements in the website," Reyes said.

The Philippine Web Awards or the "Webbys" is the country's premier award body sometimes referred to as the "Famas of the Internet." It honors the country's best websites across 19 different categories representing the different sectors of the society. It is conducted annually by Media G8way Corp. (formerly known as WS Computer Publishing Corp.).

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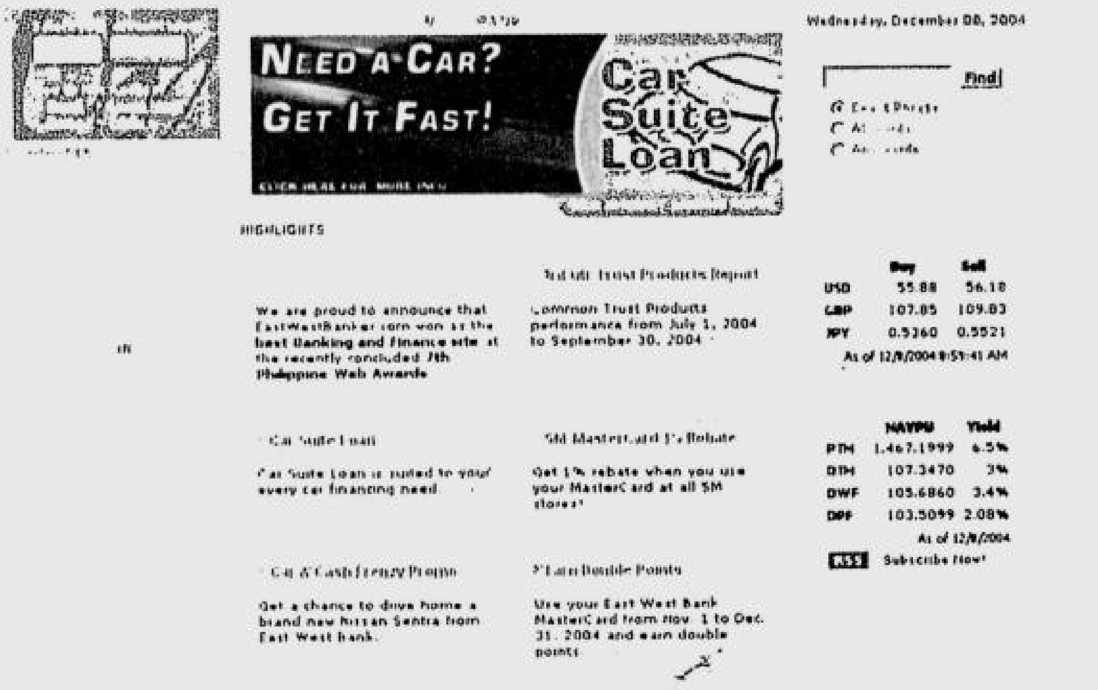

Wednesday, December 08, 2004

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The award was given during the 7th Philippine Web Awards, the country's most prestigious award giving body for the internet community.

The banking and finance category is for those sites that facilitate banking, investing and financial transactions online. Sites in this category include online banking, bills presentment and payment, financial calculators, stock trading, currency trading and insurance quotes.

What made the victory sweeter for East West Bank's web development team, led by Karl Reyes, was the bank already captured the major award only on its 3rd year of participation. East West Bank's web development team is headed by Karl Reyes.

"We joined in 2002 because we wanted our site evaluated but we were happy to become a finalist in our first try. To be a finalist, you will go through a process of elimination. But this year, it was our goal to win and we hit the target," Reyes said.

Reyes said his team was given due recognition because they work hard to make the East West Bank website better every year. "It's an honor for us because we were judged against everyone else in the industry."

Judges included prominent media practitioners, web developers, artists, editors and other experts in the IT and multimedia industry.

"What is truly extraordinary is that this is a homegrown developed system so internally we have control of the design and features. What we try to do is to keep the website dynamic and exciting. Every year, we change the design," Reyes pointed out.

This year, the contest had the theme "Urban Jungle," taking the organizers to the gritty mean streets that capture the havoc and humor of the Pinoy culture. The entries were judged on the following criteria: content, design, usability and functionality.

Content is important because a site must not only be flashy but it must have the images, multimedia elements and links that serve the purpose for which the site was created. In design, the site must be visually appealing through the creative of colors, images and space.

The site must also be usable, directing the user through the use of the site effortlessly. Finally, the site must be functional; that is, it is fully interactive so the user can get optimum use of the site.

"East West Bank's website boasts of eye-catching presentation and fusion of dazzling yet elegant colors of blue, red and yellow, together with its easy-to-navigate links and usable and informative content. What we did was to adapt to all browsers as much as possible, Reyes said.

The East West Bank website has all the information that the suppliers need. With just a few clicks, the user can easily access the bank's products and services. The web even features a branch locator window, the first of its kind, for the user's convenience.

Customers can also pay their bills online like Meralco, Maynilad Water, SkyCable, Home Cable, Smart, Globe, Sun Cellular, SSS, Pag-ibig and selected credit cards.

Most importantly, the website is seriously considered as a way to communicate with the bank's customers.

The site receives an average of 50 e-mails daily and Reyes' team makes sure these are adequately responded to. The e-mails involve a range of issues including some complaints, which are immediately sent to the branch concerned. If a reply is not received, Reyes himself calls up the branch.

The web development team is focused on improving the site. The site is regularly updated to reflect the changes in the company such as new products, change in rates, new branch openings and more.

But at the end of the day, the team doesn't take everything so seriously. "We make constructive criticisms, which are very light. I make sure that everyone of us will come up with our own findings, concerns and contributions and we trust each other's ideas," Reyes emphasized.

With East West Bank's breaking into the winner's circle, the team is challenged now more than ever to come up with a site that lives up to its billing. "We are more challenged now to meet customers' demands. The public can expect more improvements in the website," Reyes said.

The Philippine Web Awards or the "Webbys" is the country's premier award body sometimes referred to as the "Famas of the Internet." It honors the country's best websites across 19 different categories representing the different sectors of the society. It is conducted annually by Media G8way Corp. (formerly known as WS Computer Publishing Corp.).

Pinoy finds gold in grass, weaves way to success

TO most people, the lowly and unassuming grass may seem just a shade of green, but to Roberto M. Locsin, it is a gold mine from which he has woven a fortune.

Locsin is now one of the country's leading exporters of furniture and lamps, and his products are made of grass, vines, rattan, abaca, and other indigenous materials woven on metal.

His company, Locsin International, supplies those high-end products to some 70 importers from all over Europe.

And it all began in Albay some 25 years ago in 1979 when this newly married young man was fascinated by how native materials could be transformed into attractive handicraft.

That fascination made him take photos of the different products of handicraft stores, knowing albeit intuitively that these could sell to the international market.

With an old typewriter, Locsin and his pregnant wife wrote some 50 letters a day to prospective buyers.

Their perseverance paid off when he finally received an order for a 20-foot-container load of buri furniture and baskets. That first order came with a $5,000 letter of credit (LC) from Bavastro of Belgium.

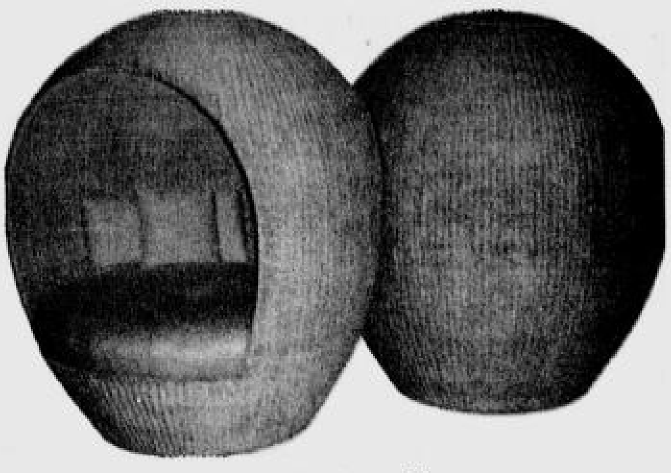
"I was jumping with joy even if I had not seen a letter of credit all my life. Thereupon I had to register a name for my company to enable me to transact business," Locsin recalls. "And with a 45-day deadline, I had to run around the place looking for suppliers since I had no factory at that time."

Nonetheless, Locsin was able to deliver the order on time and of good quality.

Soon, another buyer, Marvin Walker from the United States, placed an order for knocked-down sofa sides made of rattan, which Locsin sourced from Tabaco, Albay. He first made a product sample, which was approved, including the price.

To ensure the quality of the products, Locsin bought sanding, straightening, and round-rod milling machines, hardly knowing that these equipment would usher in the rise of his own factory in May of that year.

Locsin set up the factory in a rundown property in Tagas, Albay. The factory used rattan and buri materials in making furniture and picnic baskets.


UNIQUE love seat made from local materials

"With only two customers, though, I was already shipping a lot to Belgium and the US. Almost every week, I was shipping two to three containers of buri baskets and a lot of sofa sides," Locsin says.

Even then, Locsin realized that his business operations could not be sustained on a year-round basis with only two buyers. Yet, work at his factory in Albay would suffer costly interruptions because of frequent typhoons.

Thus, in 1980, he went to Manila and set up a factory in Bulacan.

Needing more buyers, Locsin joined the Manila Fame International Show organized by the Center for International Trade Exhibitions and Missions (Citem).

"My first trade fair in 1985 was not successful, however, because I didn't have a designer at that time. So I went to the Design Center Philippines where I met Val Padilla who made the furniture designs for me. Up to this time, Val and I collaborate on product design and development," Locsin narrates.

"From 1985 I joined Citem's April and October shows every year hence. Recently, I also took in a second designer, Tony Gonzales. And because of my continuing product development, my sales increased," Locsin adds.

Now Locsin also uses sea grass, lampakanay, pandan, nito, and handmade paper for his amazing products that have been gaining international attention.

The company seems to have a limitless source of fascinating designs that continue to captivate buyers from all over the world. Just like Locsin himself, they are fascinated by the natural appeal of wire and metal combined with nito vines, sea grass and other local plant varieties in exciting and highly artistic blend. Locsin International does not use wood for any of its furniture products.

And for being the first to use sea grass, Locsin's company earned the Special Ecology Award from Citem in 1991.

For its various other achievements, Locsin International also bagged the much-coveted Golden Shell Award in 1995 given by then President Fidel V. Ramos.

Only recently, Locsin International won the Good Design Product Award 2004 in Japan.

The company's award-winning furniture products and furnishings will be showcased at the Philippine International Furniture Show, which will be staged by the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines at the World Trade Center Metro Manila and the Philippine Trade Training Center from Feb. 28 to March 3, 2005.

Locsin and his wife Cindelyn attribute their good fortune to many factors. For one, the innate design and workmanship skills of Filipinos have been honed and harnessed in Locsin International. The sizable investment poured each year into research and development attests to their serious pursuit of product excellence, world-class innovations, and global competitiveness. Their policy of using locally available materials does not only lessen supply problems, but also promotes the environment.

"Throughout the years, our company has built a reputation of reliability, quality and efficient service to its customers. We consider these qualities as the important ingredients for our corporate success in maintaining a loyal and satisfied clientele," Locsin concludes.

Combining functionality, technology, affordability

INTEGRATED VGA camera, photo messaging, remixable ringtones and affordability make the Motorola C651 a mobile treasure.

Motorola, a global leader in wireless, broadband and automotive communications technologies, announced the affordable and feature packed Motorola C651 camera phone—answering consumer demand for a mobile that combines top tier functionality and technology with affordability. Complete with an integrated digital camera, large 128 x 128 color display, 65,000 colors CSTN, MP3 ringtones, responsive lighting and vibesync, the Motorola C651 promises to deliver a complete mobile experience that stimulates all senses.

"With a truly sophisticated look and in-demand features including an integrated digital camera and instant messaging, the affordable Motorola C651 promises to provide consumers with a mobile that satisfies their communication and budget needs," said Arlene Aran Amarante, country manager-personal communications sector, Motorola Philippines Inc. "Furthering Motorola's commitment to deliver a variety of handsets at price points to suit all users, the new model C651 is a strong product that delivers a full featured mobile experience to the mass market."

Offers

- More than your money's worth: Providing the best mobile experience at the lowest price of P6,590, Motorola C651 ensures a worthy investment at minimal outlay.
- Messaging your way: With an integrated camera and photo messaging, users can snap a photo and share memories and experiences in an instant. Instant messaging functionality promises that users can get their message across with ease.
- DJ fabulous: With the unique MotoMixer feature, Motorola C651 enables users to explore their musical side with the ability to mix and re-master favorite ringtones or produce original masterpieces that cause users to groove to each incoming call.
- Dazzling color display: Combining a vivid 128 x 128 color display with 65,000 colors CSTN and a keypad that lights up when touched are several ways to give a lift to anyone's day. An additional feature makes the keypad light up in sync with incoming calls.
- Gaming for life: The young at heart will be delighted by the Motorola C651 with its ability to download favorite games and bring them life by shaking and rattling with every bump, kick and crash. Responsive lights and a 5-way navigation key complete this extra sensory experience.
- Get the basics right: Navigating C651's user interface is a cinch and the long battery life will never let you down. A sophisticated package at the right price promises to satisfy savvy users demanding the best of all worlds.

About Motorola

Motorola Inc. is a global leader in wireless, broadband and automotive communications technologies that help make life smarter, safer, simpler, synchronized and fun. Sales in 2003 were $27.1 billion. Motorola creates innovative technological solutions that benefit people at home, at work and on the move. The company also is a progressive corporate citizen dedicated to operating ethically, protecting the environment and supporting the communities in which it does business. For more information: www.motorola.com.

Services make it a dog's life for pets

NEW YORK—Two-year-old Tyson toddles out of a white stretch limousine at 10:30 a.m., eager to join his buddies at day-care. But he is no baby headed for a tony Manhattan nursery school—he's a bulldog.

Tyson is one of about 10 dogs being chauffeured from their homes to day-care by Alice Moss, who runs a New York dog grooming, day-care and boarding business. Her operation has grown from five canine clients 12 years ago to around 50 today.

Americans are pampering their pets more than ever. Spa treatments, day-care and even psychotherapy have, in the literal sense, gone to the dogs in a major way, turning high-class, and often high-priced, pet services into big business.

That hasn't escaped the notice of industry heavyweights like Petco Animal Supplies Inc. and Petsmart Inc.

Both have recently pointed to services as a key growth area, and both are testing day-care operations.

"People really believe that their dogs are an important part of their lives. It's not just a dog," said Moss, who starts picking up dogs at 6:30 a.m. and drops them off again in the evening in a limo with the words "Doggie Diva" across the side. "They feel bad leaving them home alone."

About 62 percent of US households have pets, including 78 million cats and 65 million dogs, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association.

The industry group estimates that pet owners will spend about $34.3 billion on their animals in 2004, up from $32.4 billion in 2003 and double the $17 billion they spent in 1994.

It also expects $2.2 billion will be spent on grooming and boarding services this year, up nearly 5 percent from 2003.

Americans can now outfit their pets in designer brands like Gucci, Coach and Louis Vuitton.

At upscale department store Neiman Marcus, pet owners can pick up a hooded shearling Burberry dog coat for about $400, a $45 Kate Spate dog collar, or a $225 Juicy Couture satin dog carrier.

Hair-care company Paul Mitchell Systems recently launched John Paul Pet, a line of shampoos, conditioners, wipes, grooming tools and toys.

Pet owners willing to dish out dough for products such as these are also increasingly demanding upscale services.

"More and more people are treating their pets like children, and as part of that overall trend, they're giving their 'kids,' in essence, everything they need, and services are a big component of that," said David Lenhardt, senior vice president of services at Petsmart. "That's helping to drive the growth."

This fall, Petsmart opened its first stand-alone "Doggie Day Camp" in Pasadena, California. A day at the 2,400-square-foot facility, which is open seven days a week, costs $22.

The company also has day-care in the 14 locations where it runs its PETsHOTEL program. A night in the "hotels" costs $21, or $31 for a "doggie suite," which includes the use of a lambskin bed and a television offering dog-themed movies like "Lady and the Tramp" and "101 Dalmatians."

While there seems to be no word yet from pets on how they feel about stepped-up services like these, their owners are eating them up. Petsmart's services business grew more than 25 percent in 2002 and 2003 and is expected to grow at least 20 through 2006, Lenhardt said.

MOSS sits with dogs in her company limousine after they were picked up at home and chauffeured to her dog grooming, daycare, and boarding business in New York. REUTERS

Petco and PetSmart both offer grooming, veterinary services and canine education classes. Petco customers can bring their pets in for a session with a professional photographer.

"They're trying to become a one-stop shop," said Joan Storms, a retail analyst at Wedbush Morgan Securities, adding that the luxury pet hotel concept is more palatable to many pet owners than the idea of typical boarding kennel.

For pet stores, it comes down to profits.

At Petsmart, the operating margins on services are about three times larger than the core margins of an overall store, Lenhardt said.

Petsmart's services business accounted for about 7 percent of total revenues in 2004, up from around 4.6 percent three years ago. Third quarter pet service revenues were $57.8 million, up 23.5 percent from the year-ago period.

Petco said in a recent conference call that revenue from services is the fastest growing part of its business, with sales of grooming services alone up nearly 20 percent year-over-year in the third quarter.

The company offers dog day-care services at one of its California stores and plans to launch it in three more locations by the end of this year. *Reuters*

Bank partners with Gawad Kalinga to build homes

RECOGNIZING the need to contribute to society in nation building, UnionBank recently partnered with Gawad Kalinga (GK) to build 10 homes for poor families in Cavite.

UnionBankers, Couples for Christ (CFC) Gawad Kalinga members and volunteers were welcomed by a motorcade complete with the lively music and marching of a band. The group trooped to Cavite for the groundbreaking rites of the UnionBank-GK Adlas Village in Silang. The Caviteños, the council members and families of the community, and program hosts Bro. JR and Pinky Datiles greeted their guests warmly, saying that it was an inspiring and beautiful day as UnionBank is leading the way in the caring and sharing of hearts with the people of Adlas.

GK provincial head Cering Dator, who introduced UnionBank chair and CEO Justo A. Ortiz, lauded UnionBank for being the first bank partner of Gawad Kalinga in their housing program for the poor. Dator jokingly referred to Ortiz as "Señor Tito Ortiz, the *artista* ng GK Village" as he likened him to "Fernando," the lead actor of the telenovela, "Te Amo."

In his brief message, Ortiz said: "UnionBank joins hands with GK and with you, the people of GK Adlas Village in the spirit of "sariling sikap" and "bayanihan," and this excites us. We are also very grateful for the opportunity of being able to help. We take our corporate social responsibility in UnionBank very seriously and are constantly looking for meaningful opportunities to help. And I think that this GK Village in Adlas, we see a great deal of helping people that know how to help themselves. And I think this is very inspiring, it's an inspiration for us, you are an inspiration to us. My personal motto is (in Latin), "*Labor Omnia Vincit*," which translated in English means, "Work conquers all." The chairman went further and translated it in Tagalog, "*Sa sariling sikap, makakamit ang tagumpay*," which was heartily applauded by the crowd. "*Pagpalain tayong lahat. Maraming salamat at magandang umaga*," were Ortiz's concluding remarks.

On the same occasion, UnionBank turned over its P500,000 check donation to Gawad Kalinga and the community council members for the construction of the 10 houses. Ortiz, UnionBank consultant and director of the corporate social responsibility (CSR) unit of the bank Maria Goolsby, Dator and CFC provincial head Oscar Oblepias signed the UnionBank-GK memorandum of agreement. EVP Hermie Pugeda and SVP Cesar Ilagan were witnesses. During a chat with Dator, the chairman and Mrs. Goolsby suggested that family catechism and values formation education be taught to the communities. They emphasized the need for the children and their parents to know and understand the value of what is right from what is wrong, as they go about their day-to-day activities; the importance of integrating the core values of honesty, integrity, hard work and perseverance in their individual and community life.

Rev. Fr. Paul de Leon blessed the site prior to the groundbreaking rites led by Ortiz, Dator, Mrs. Goolsby, Pugeda and lawyer Fe Macalino. UnionBankers from the head office and branches, CFC and GK members, and the Kapitbahayan (residents of the community) all joined hands to do the initial carpentry and masonry work for the first house to be built. The group also had lunch together and the day ended with UnionBank's gift giving to kids who attended the event. GK also handed UnionBankers a "pabaon" of fruits. It was one happy and meaningful day that made everyone present in high spirits.

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Philippines moves forward in corporate governance

THE CAPITAL Market Development Council (CMDC) adopted significant moves to ensure that corporate governance reforms continue to be pursued and to put the economy in step with other economies in East Asia.

At the Council meeting last Nov. 18, CMDC accepted the offer from the World Bank to conduct a second formal review of the corporate governance regime in the Philippines. This would make the Philippines among the first economies in the world to go through a second ROSC (review of standards and codes) on corporate governance. The first one was conducted in 2001; in line with agreements made then, a second review is supposed to be undertaken after 3 years.

The Council also received an Update Report on corporate governance reform initiatives. This was prepared and presented by Dr. Jesus Estanislao, the chair of the CMDC Task Force on Corporate Governance. The report noted that the Philippines has completed the first two of seven steps included in the regional (East Asian) framework program for improving actual corporate governance practices. The steps completed are those requiring corporate directors to undergo an Orientation Seminar on Corporate Governance and the setting up of Board Committees (Audit, Risk and Governance) in banks and key financial institutions.

In view of the remaining steps that have yet to be completed, the Council endorsed the formulation and use of scorecards as a tool for measuring actual progress in corporate governance practices. Priority is to be given to banks and other financial institutions. Also included in the priority list for inclusion in the scorecard program are key GOCCs and GFIs as well as publicly listed companies and other public corporations.

A working session was organized on corporate governance scorecards last Nov. 22. It was a forum for Thai and Hong Kong experts who shared their experience in coming up with scorecards for the priority corporations and enterprises in their economies. Representatives of institutions and agencies directly involved in the scorecard project attended the working session organized by the Institute of Corporate Directors.

The Council noted that significant importance has been given to independent directors. However, the Council noted the minor differences between the regulatory agencies in their specification of qualifications for independent directors. The Task Force under Dr. Jesus Estanislao has been asked to iron out those minor differences and propose a common definition of independent directors.

The Council recognized that too much focus has been placed on independent directors. The focus has to be expanded to include all corporate directors, who must take up their duties according to high professional and ethical standards demanded by the recently revised OECD corporate governance principles. The Council endorsed the Professional Directors Program that has been designed to professionalize the practice of corporate directorship in the Philippines, in concert with other economies in East Asia. It looks at corporate directors who participate in the program as part of the pool of independent directors that need to be expanded immediately in view of all the regulations that have already been issued.

The co-chairs of CMDC are Secretary Juanita Amatong of the Department of Finance and Dr. Conchita L. Manabat of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines (FINEX). Representatives of key regulatory agencies and sectoral organizations with key roles in the development of the capital market are members of the Council.

UAP LEADS NATIONAL ARCHITECTURE WEEK

The United Architects of the Philippines - the Integrated and Accredited Professional Organization of Architects - led the nationwide celebration of the National Architecture Week from Dec 5 to 11. The weeklong celebration ended with an Awarding, Recognition and Culmination Night back to back with a Musical Concert at the Moomba Restaurant in Quezon City on Dec. 11. Shown in photo (standing, from left) are: architect Abelardo Miraflor, architect Enrique Olonan, architect Jean Cornejo, architect Jaime Silva, (partly hidden), architect Virgilio Andres Jr., architect Amado Tandoc and architect Edric Marco Florentino.

JULIE'S BAKESHOP CEO WINS 2004 AGORA AWARD

At the Nov. 22 Awarding Ceremony for the 2004 Agora Awards, Julie's Bakeshop CEO Roberto 'Bobby' Gandionco won the Agora Award for Large-Scale Entrepreneurship. Shown are (from left): Neil and Ophelia Gandionco, Julie's Bakeshop founders Rodrigo and Julie Gandionco, Agora Awardee Bobby Gandionco with spouse Janet, Dr's. Judith and Rico Gandionco, and Joseph Gandionco.

Dressing up your basic AUV

SO YOU got yourself a brand-new Toyota Revo. It's one of the entry-level models (GL, GLX, DLX, GSX) that come with power-assist features and perhaps even alloy wheels, but not much else.

How do you customize it to make it look like one of the top-of-the-line models that look like genuine SUVs? This should be easy. Just slap on any of the several aftermarket fiberglass sports conversion body kits available, right?

Wrong! Because that'll only be the start of your problems. Most aftermarket body kits require drilling more than two dozen holes on your car's body to install the bumper overriders, overfenders as well as the door and tailgate cladding. Drilling leaves your vehicle susceptible to rusting and compromises its water-tightness, which is crucial in our flood-prone streets. It can also void your factory warranty. Needless to say, if you decide to remove the body kit, you'll be left with what might look like a bullet-riddled vehicle.

Then it's a tricky job of making paint adhere to the fiberglass panels, let alone ensure that the brittle fiberglass doesn't distort with age, heat, impacts or body flexing - which often makes AUVs dressed up with such kits look older and more worn out than they really are.

So what are you to do? Should you be forced to live with your very basic looking AUV? Not with the Shark Revo Wrap-Around Cladding system, a sports conversion kit for the popular Toyota Revo. The Shark Revo kit features the aftermarket industry's first use of rigid and durable ABS plastic, the same material used in original equipment (OEM) applications for the Toyota Revo.

The use of ABS plastic allows the kit to be installed using only industrial-grade adhesives. No drilling is required. It is also much easier and less time-consuming to install. Plus the fit on your vehicle is much better than with fiberglass components. It is even safer because the original bumpers - and hence the vehicle's crumple zones - are left untouched.

Shark Revo will not void your vehicle's warranties and can be removed without any damage to your Revo. After-sales service support is likewise available and every individual part can be replaced if necessary. Shark Revo comes in plain (for those who want to paint the claddings to match/contrast with the vehicle's original finish) or matte (no painting required) finishes.

Versa Vantage Trading, manufacturer and distributor of Shark Revo is currently offering the kit for a promotional price of P19,900 (installation included). They can even install the kit at your home or office. For more info, visit Versa Vantage Trading at 1013-A Edsa, Veteran's Village, Proj. 7, Q.C. or call 372-2464 or 374-3636.

RUSTAN'S FRESH OPENS AT GATEWAY MALL

Rustan's Fresh Supermarket recently opened its 8th branch at the 2nd level of the Gateway Mall. Providing the highest standards in supermarket shopping, Rustan's Fresh Supermarket is unsurpassed in its wide selection of choice products, unique and hard-to-find local and imported goods, and its dedicated emphasis on fresh offerings. Shown during the grand opening are (from left): Sylvia Malabanan, Unilever; Paulo Atienza, Unilever; Maricar Tiangco, Rustan's Supermarket; Iris Henson, Colgate-Palmolive; Adrian Campillo, Colgate-Palmolive and Nanette Sadiua, Colgate-Palmolive.

BOBSON ENDORSERS GO ON TOUR

Karel Marquez and Japoy Lizardo, Bobson's new young endorsers, delighted their fans in the Bobson Mall Tour series following their recent grand launch. The two endorsers were fancied with the number of fans who lined up for the autograph signing held in Robinsons Metro East, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Robinsons Dept. Store Festival Mall Alabang, and SM Megamall. The 'Meet & Greet' event was opened by the Miriam College Company of One dance group highlighted by a fashion show featuring the Holiday collections of Bobson. Each collection perfectly represent the lifestyle of Bobson's target market - the youth. Karel even rendered a song number and gave away pictures to the fans. Japoy and Karel personify the cool, casual and stylish attitude of a Bobson young guy and gal. Both are making waves in their respective fields. Japoy is busy with commercial modeling while seriously honing his Taekwondo skills in preparation for his international competition in the coming months. Karel is joggling her schedule with regular tapings for MYX where she is one of the veejays, commercial shoots, and stage acting. Expect a lot of more fun activities from Bobson in the coming year. Check out the Bobson outlet nearest you. Bobson is available in the leading department stores and malls nationwide. Visit the Bobson website www.bobson.com.ph.

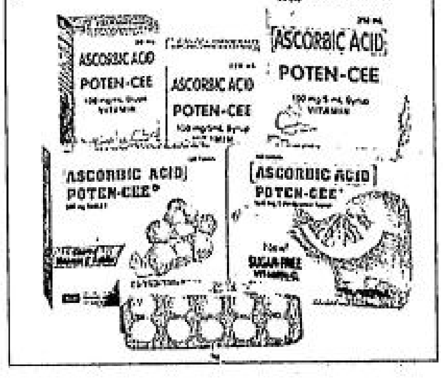
Product FILES

Family showcases in Poten-Cee promo

POTEN-Cee has launched its newest promo, the "Poten-cee ProtekTODO Tuloy-tuloy To-do-todo" promo. Meant for the whole family, the promo will give away entertainment, kitchen, techie and kiddie showcases.

To join, buy P150 worth of participating Poten-Cee products which include 30ml Drops, 60/120/250ml Syrup, candy coated tablet box of 20s/100s/500s, and sugar-free tablet box of 100s. Write your name, address, telephone number and signature on a piece of paper, put it in a letter envelope including the empty boxes of Poten-Cee products, blister packs or official receipts (single or accumulated purchase). Drop boxes are located in the 13 MRT stations from Taft to North Edsa. Entries can be also be sent to Pascual Laboratories Inc, 817 Edsa, South Triangle Box 1267 CPO, Q.C. Philippines.

Winners will receive a home entertainment showcase that includes a 29" Flat TV, a DVD player and a Digicam, a Kitchen showcase that includes a ref, microwave, dish dryer, rice cooker, airpot, oven toaster, turbo broiler and 2-burner gas stove. Also at stake is a Techie showcase of videocam, Nokia 7610 and an MP3 Player, plus a Kiddie showcase that includes computer with printer and scanner, Playstation and a Gameboy. Promo runs until Jan. 28, 2005 .



IDEAL MINDS, MPH SIGNING

Wanna know the hottest gadgets in town? Let Ideal Minds Corp and MPH Magazine guide you to what's in and what's not with MPH TV, the newest tech show to hit town. Aug. 24, witnessed the formalizing of Ideal Minds and MPH Magazine's line producing partnership that will make every techie in town tune in to their TV sets. Shown in photo are Ideal Minds Corp general manager Chris Tan with MPH Magazine's Poch and Doris Bermudez.

WINE DEPOT FETES WINE DIRECT WINE CLUB MEMBERS

Wine Depot, the Philippines' wine superstore, feted the members of its prestigious Wine Direct Wine Club at a recent Christmas party held at its showroom in Zuellig Loop, Makati City. The event featured musical performances from the Executive Summary saxophone quartet, a reggae band and a raffle where award-winning wines were given away. Wine Depot, distributor of highly-acclaimed brands also operates a wine club where members can procure wines online at discounted prices. Enjoying the fine wines at the party are Sharon Fong of Astra Zeneca, Lito Cruz of Zuellig Pharmaceuticals, Hazel Bañez, manager of Wine Direct, and Bernard Supetran of Zenith Insurance Corporation. Wine connoisseurs can log on to winedrect.com.ph for more information on Wine Depot.

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To commemorate the

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY

of

MARIA CLARA L. LOBREGAT

(April 26, 1921 – January 2, 2004)

Mass will be offered for the eternal repose of her soul
Today, January 2, 2005, at the

Metropolitan Cathedral of the Immaculate Concepcion, Zamboanga City .... 8:45 a.m.
Garden of Affection, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque .... 4:00 p.m.

and also at the following churches:

Carmelite Monastery – Cawa Cawa, Zamboanga City .... 6:30 a.m.
Dominican Chapel – Baliwasan, Zamboanga City .... 6:30 a.m.
Saint Joseph Parish – Nuñez Street, Zamboanga City .... all massess
Saint John Bosco Parish – Arnaiz Street, Makati City .... 7:30 a.m.
Claret Parish – San Jose, Zamboanga City .... 8:00 a.m.
Santa Maria Parish – Santa Maria, Zamboanga City .... 8:00 a.m.
Holy Family Chapel – Greenview Executive Village, Quezon City .... 9:00 a.m.
San Isidro Parish – Taft Avenue, Pasay City .... 10:00 a.m.
Nuestra Señora de Guia – Ermita, Manila .... 10:00 a.m.
Sanctuario de San Antonio – Forbes Park, Makati City .... 10:30 a.m.
Santo Niño de Paz Chapel – Greenbelt Park, Makati City .... 10:30 a.m.
Mary the Queen Parish – Greenhills, San Juan .... 6:00 p.m.
Good Shepherd Cathedral Shrine – Fairview, Quezon City .... 8:00 p.m.

Her children, **Concepcion**, **Celso**, **Pablo**, **Jose**, **Lourdes** and **Jerome**, request the relatives, friends, and people whose lives she has touched to offer a prayer for her soul.

Her family also conveys sincere appreciation and gratitude to all who sympathized, remember, offer masses and prayers, and keep **Caling** alive in their hearts and memories.

"I am the resurrection and the life,
He who believes in Me will live
eventhough he dies, and whoever
believes in me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Edilberto T. dela Cruz, Sr.

Peacefully joined our Lord on December 30, 2004
at the age of 59.

His loving wife Vangie; children Francis, Mike, Tyn, Jr and Angel; children-in-law Bong, Joei and Haidz; grandchildren Koby, Prince, Mekhi, Krystelle, Pringles and Danie; father-in-law Julian S. Pangilinan; brothers and sisters, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on January 4, 2005 at the Eternal Garden Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Nacional Memorial Homes.

"Pour out your heart before Him;
God is refuge for us."
Psalm 62:8

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." — John 3:16

DOLORES LOLITA SOLIMAN-GOPEZ

of Orlando, Florida, Valle Verde, Pasig and Candaba, Pampanga

Died in the Grace of our Lord
in Orlando at the age of 72.

She is survived by her children **Michael** (Phil), **Erwin** & **Amy** (NY), **Jeffrey** & **Carol** (DE), **Roland** & **Lisa** (FL), **Yvette** & **Joel** (FL), **Ian** (FL), sisters **Luz S. Evia** & **Maria S. Reyes**, in-laws **Teresita** & **Norberto Timbol**, grandchildren **Ingrid**, **Vanessa**, **Katrina**, **Joshua**, **Sabrina** and **JD** and other relatives.

Funeral arrangements are being handled by Baldwin Fairchild Funeral Home in Orlando. Masses will be held at Good Shepherd Church followed by interment at Chapel Hill Cemetery on January 04, 2005 (Tuesday).

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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2	1,000 sq.m. TCT No. T-132019 3 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 31/Blk 15, #12 Saturn St., Puentebella Subd., Brgy. Taculing, Bacolod City	1,079,500.00
3	301 sq m. TCT No. T-114666 3 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level bungalow	Lot 8/Blk 2, Cardinal St., Olympia Village, Brgy. Alijis, Bacolod City	308,100.00
4	240 sq m. TCT No. T-159195 2 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 1064-H-2-0-32/Blk 23, Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	266,000.00
5	240 sq m. TCT No. T-126852 3 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 14/Blk 1, #93 Tulehaw St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	259,500.00
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7	710 sq m. TCT No. T-10722 2 BR with 2 T&B Poorly maintained bungalow	Lot 205-B, Plaridel St., Silay City Negros Occidental	1,093,700.00
8	500 sq m. TCT No. T-140635 3 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 163-G-2-D-13-C-4-C/Blk 3, Salvacion Subd., Victorias City, Negros Occidental	507,200.00
9	416 sq m. TCT No. T-104925 4 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 11/Blk 2, Domingo Libares St., Zone 1, Talisay City, Negros Occidental	958,200.00
10	240 sq.m. TCT No. T-38460 2 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 1064-H-2-0-30/ #18, Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	256,000.00
11	600 sq m. TCT No. T-10684 3 BR with 2 T&B Deteriorated Split-level bungalow	Lot 18/Blk 12, Hofileña Subd., Silay City Negros Occidental	542,000.00
12	991 sq m. TCT No. T-114665 LOT ONLY	Lot 17/Blk 13, #20 Kamonsil St., La Salle Subd., Brgy. Villamonte, Bacolod City	2,973,000.00
13	240 sq m. TCT No. T-126848 2 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 1064-H-2-0-14/ #19, Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	248,800.00
14	420 sq.m. TCT Nos. T-16337/116338 2 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level bungalow	Lot 12&13/Blk 9, Guava Ave., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	430,600.00
15	412 sq m. TCT No. T-128025 3 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 10/Blk 6, Gamboa Subdivision, Talisay City, Negros Occidental	691,300.00
16	240 sq.m. TCT No. T-103690 2 BR with 1 T&B Deteriorated Split-level Bungalow	Lot 1064-H-2-0-31/ #20, Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	246,900.00
17	192 sq.m. TCT No. T-122809 3 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 1064-H-2-0-36, Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	217,700.00
18	337 sq m. TCT No. T-114941 4 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained two (2) - storey Bungalow	Lot 14-B/Blk 13, #169 Dahlia Extension, Brgy. Villamonte, Bacolod City	651,500.00
19	500 sq m. TCT No. T-115093 5 BR with 4 T&B Newly Renovated Bungalow	Lot 20-B/Blk 18, Venus St., Puentebella Subd., Brgy. Taculing, Bacolod City	2,029,600.00
20	263 sq m. TCT No. T-117163 5 BR with 2 T&B Newly renovated Bungalow	Lot 2/Blk 1, Pedrosa Subdivision, Alijis, Bacolod City	984,400.00
21	500 sq m. TCT No. T-116331 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 17-B-1/Blk 23, Saturn St., Taculing, Bacolod City	551,800.00
22	240 sq m. TCT No. T-122810 3 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 3/Blk 2, #38 Martinico St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	280,400.00
23	411 sq m. TCT Nos. T-71777/171776 4 BR with 1 T&B Poorly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 13 & 14/Blk 6, #79 Adarna St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Brgy. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	487,400.00
24	369 sq m. TCT No. T-201461 2 BR with 1 T&B Fairly maintained Split-level Bungalow	Lot 44/Blk 7, Remedios cor. Immaculada Sts., Canatown Subd., Victorias City, Negros Occidental	429,900.00

Complete description of the properties including Bidding Forms & Instruction To Bidders are available at SSS Bacolod City Branch, 2nd St., corner Lacson St., Bacolod City. Please contact Noel B. Villanueva at telephone numbers (034) 435-0181 or (034) 433-1378.

Sealed Bids should be dropped at the Bid Box located at the Administrative Section (2nd Floor) of SSS Bacolod City Branch from 8:00 A.M. to 1:59 P.M. on January 28, 2005. The Bids should be labeled Acquired Assets Disposal Committee, Social Security System, East Avenue, Quezon City.

Bidder's deposit equivalent to at least 30% (if bidder is former owner, his/her spouse, parents and children) or 10% (if bidder does not fall on the preceding category) of the bid price in cash (Philippine Currency/US Dollar based on the Philippine Dealing System (PDS) exchange rate) or in Manager's check payable to the SSS issued by a local bank, must be enclosed with the sealed bid (any other forms or draft purportedly as manner of payment is not acceptable). The bidder must also sign the sealed envelope across its flap. Sealed bid without the bidder's bond will not be entertained.

The award shall be made to the bidder who made the most advantageous offer to the SSS. As a rule, cash bids shall be preferred over installment bids. An installment bid shall, however, be considered as more advantageous if the installment bid is greater by at least 20% over a cash bid. In case of installment bids, the bid with the shortest payment period shall be preferred unless the difference in the bids is greater by at least 20%, in which case the bid with the longer payment period shall be considered more advantageous to the SSS.

The sale of the properties shall be "As is, Where Is". The winning bidder shall be responsible to acquire and take possession of the property without seeking the assistance of the SSS.

After deducting the bid deposit from the Bid Price, the balance shall be payable either in cash within 30 days or amortized up to a maximum of 120 months at prevailing interest rate. If bidder opts to amortize, proof of income (ITR, business permit, or Certificate of Employment and Compensation) shall be among the documents for submission on bidding date. Upon approval of the sale, the buyer shall issue twelve (12) PDCs covering the first year of amortization and the same number of checks for each succeeding years. Actual expenses or advances made by SSS for foreclosure and consolidation of title shall be added to purchase price of the former owner or of his/her successor-in-interest.

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any defect found therein.

All awards shall be subject to the approval of the Social Security Commission whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned.

(Sgd.) AVP MARIANO PABLO S. TOLENTINO
Chairman, Acquired Assets Disposal Committee

(PDI – January 2, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
MARINDUQUE STATE COLLEGE
Tanza, Boac, Marinduque

Please be informed that the **MARINDUQUE STATE COLLEGE** (MSC) Board of Trustees announces the opening of the position of

College President

The following are the qualifications for the position:
1. Filipino citizen
2. Preferably Doctoral Degree holder
3. Preferably not more than 60 years old at the time of appointment as President of the College
4. Have at least five (5) years of managerial capability
5. Morally upright

Applicants are required to submit clearance from the following:
1. Ombudsman
2. Civil Service Commission
3. National Bureau of Investigation
4. Sandiganbayan

Applicants are also required to submit the following:
1. Detailed Curriculum Vitae
2. Vision-Mission for the College
3. Neuro Exam
4. Medical Certificate

Interested applicants are requested to submit 5 (copies) of formal application, and all requirements on or before January 26, 2005 to:

Com. Ma. Cristina D. Padolina
Commission on Higher Education
DAP Bldg., San Miguel Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(02) 638-48-70

or

Mrs. Proserfina M. Mablog
Coordinator
Search for MSC Presidency
Marinduque State College
Tanza, Boac, Marinduque
(042) 332-20-28

VICTOR S. VITTO, SR. Ed.D.
Officer-in-Charge

JOB OPENING FOR A SENIOR PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Competencies required:
- **research and evaluation skills** for satisfactory management of the Foundation's internal and external evaluation
- **information management skills** for the continuing development and utilization of a customized computerized comprehensive program data base and a macro data base
- **analytical and creative skills** required for the production of synthesis reports and discussions with various stakeholders, particularly on the results of evaluation studies
- **supervisory skills** to effectively optimize the services of a Program Assistant
- **excellent communication knowledge and skills** to produce papers for internal as well as external dissemination including those that are intended for publication
- **human relations skills** to sustain as well as expand the Foundation's pool of consultants, technical service providers and other contacts to help promote the interest of the Foundation.

The applicant must have earned a graduate degree in the social science field or has completed all required units. Most importantly, the candidate must have at least five years of experience in research and evaluation. Actual work experience must include work in a non-profit organization for at least three years with excellent performance evaluation. It is also essential for the applicant to have a working knowledge of various computer applications and report generation. Application letter with resumé (attached to which is a 2x2 picture) should reach the following addressee not later than January 10, 2005.

The Nominations Committee
Consuelo Foundation, Inc.
27th Floor Citibank Tower
8741 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City 0702
through mail, fax: 848-0553, or e-mail: climpangog@consuelo.org.

Republic of the Philippines
HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID

The HOME GUARANTY CORPORATION (HGC), a government-owned and controlled corporation with office address at Jade Bldg., 335 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue, Makati City invites all interested parties to participate in the bidding of the long-term MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE COMMONWEALTH MARKET.

PROPERTY/PROJECT : COMMONWEALTH MARKET

LOCATION : Commonwealth Enterprise Zone (Block 6), Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City

TOTAL FLOOR AREA : 17,551.43 sqm on a 2.42 hectares property, more or less

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY : 2-storey building with basement comprising of the main building (or a total of 3 floors) and 2-level storey terrace building with basement (or a total of 3 floors), both of which consist of different stall sections plus the stalls in front of the market and those outside the market's periphery totaling to approximately 2,312 stalls registered under various vendors/stallholders.

TERMS OF LEASE : Straight lease for 20 years with negotiation for renewal on the 18th year;
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A minimum of 5% escalation per annum.

MINIMUM BID : P1.5 Million monthly rental rate net of all taxes and fees due Local and National Government Authorities

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING ACTIVITIES IS AS FOLLOWS:

Issuance of Bid Documents & Eligibility Requirements	January 3 -7 2005
Pre-bid Conference	January 8 , 2005
Start of Submission of Eligibility Requirements	January 24-28, 2005
Deadline of Submission and Opening of Eligibility Reqts.	January 28, 2005
Issuance of Notice of Eligibility	January 31, 2005
Start of Submission of the Bid Proposal	Feb. 15, 2005
Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bids	March 1, 2005

The bidder is advised to inspect the subject property to determine its actual condition. Particulars of the bidding may be obtained from the HGC Project Management and Acquired Assets Disposition Group (PMAADG) at the 4th Floor Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. Other inquiries relative to the bidding may be inquired at telephone nos. 897-3290 and 8973286.

The bid documents and eligibility requirements may be obtained for a non-refundable fee of **FIFTY THOUSAND PESOS (P50,000.00)** from the Committee for the Bidding of Management and Administration of the Operations of the Commonwealth Market (COMMITTEE) starting **January 3, 2005** at the PMAADG office.

A Pre-bid conference will be held on **January 8, 2005 at 2:00 P.M.**, 5th Floor HGC Conference Room, Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

Eligibility requirements/documents should be submitted in a sealed envelope to the COMMITTEE **on or before January 28, 2005.** The eligibility envelopes shall be **opened on January 28, 2005 at 2:00 P.M.**, at 5th Floor HGC Conference Room, Jade Building, 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. The eligibility of registered bidders shall be evaluated using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria based on the eligibility requirements specified in Annex B of the Terms of Reference.

All bids should be submitted to the COMMITTEE **on or before March 1, 2005 at 2:00 P.M.** The sealed bid should be accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the one year rental in the form of cash or certified manager's/cashier's check payable to HGC.

The Opening of Bids will be held at **2:00 P.M. on March 1, 2005** at the 5th Floor, Conference Room of the HGC Office.

The HGC reserves the right to reject any or all offers; to waive any defects or to accept such offer as may be considered most advantageous to the Corporation.

MA. BELEN S. FABELLA
Chairwoman
Committee for the Bidding of Management and Administration of Operations of the Commonwealth Market

(PDI–Dec. 26, 2004 & Jan. 2, 2005)

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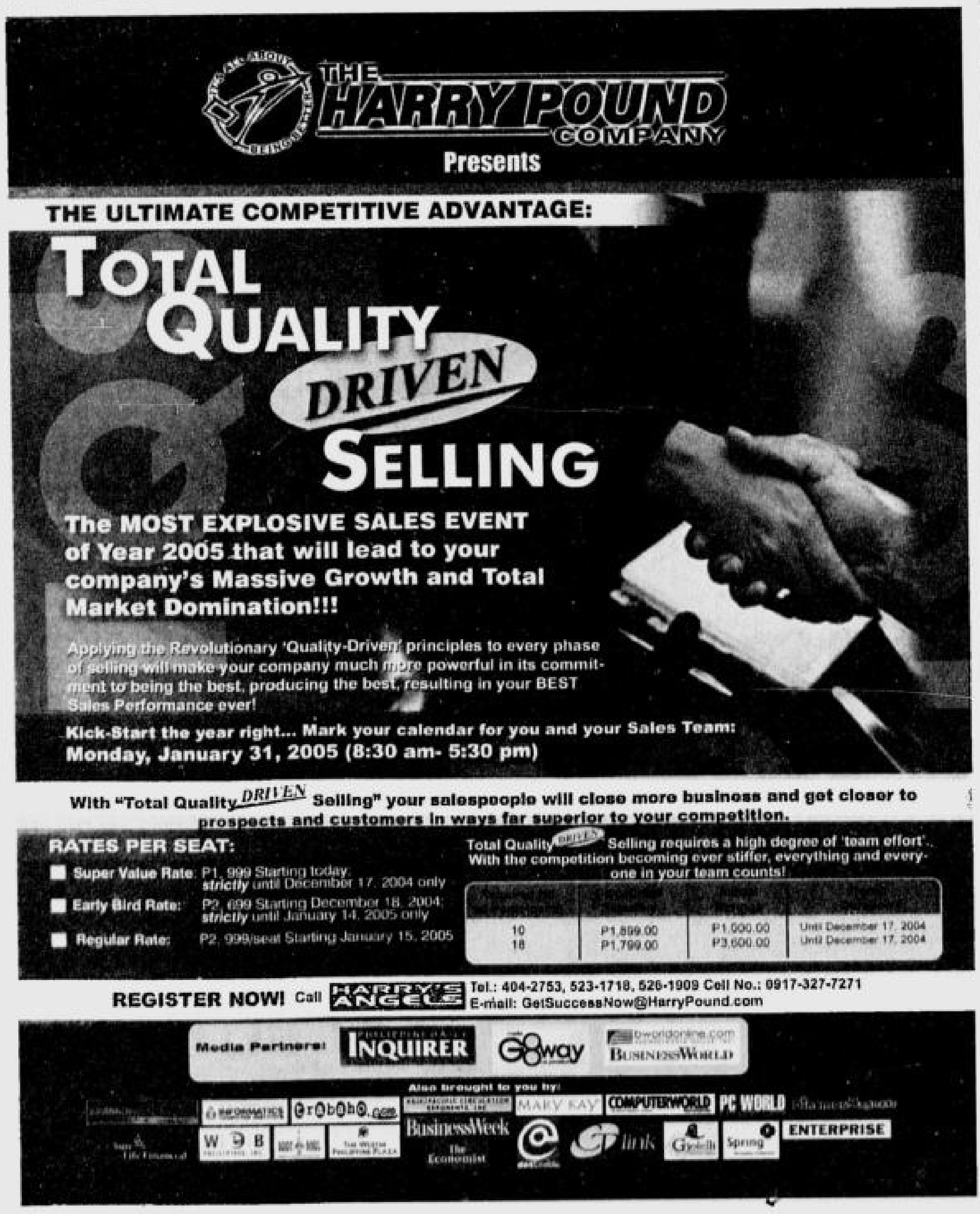

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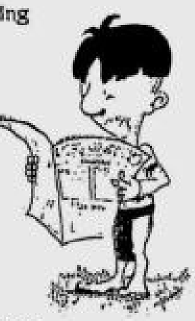

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Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Tough luck in the Year of the Rooster

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Raffy Lerma

THE YEAR of the Wood Rooster will be dominated by wood and metal elements. A conflict in these elements may bring chaos and violence, said Marites Allen, a certified feng-shui expert at the Lilian Too Institute of Feng Shui and president/CEO of World of Feng Shui Phils. Inc. (tels. 9177112, 9106000/6340).

"With no water, which means no wealth, and no fire, which means no fame, we start the year with a weak earth element," Allen said.

"We need water and fire to balance the four pillars. Decorate your house or wear either blue or black for water and red for fire."

Allen said 2005 is a year with no "lap chun," meaning no spring, no beginning, no growth.

"To stimulate growth in one's house, it's best to plant pussy willow, plum blossom and narcissus, which are wonderful representations of spring, starting from the Chinese New Year. Or put long stalks of willows into dragon/phoenix vases (red ones are best), making sure you have neatly sliced off the bottoms of these long stalks. This is to ensure the stalks can absorb water so they'll sprout young leaves."

Major afflictions

Afflictions can bring losses, accidents, illnesses, aggravations and a whole lot of tough-luck situations, said Allen. So it's vital to identify the good and bad luck locations, which change from one year to the next, in order to effectively correct afflicted areas while enhancing auspicious sectors.

From the center of the house in 2004, the "Deadly Five Yellow" (feng-shui term for afflictions) enters into northwest, the location of the patriarch or the man of the house. So Allen urged that everything that suggests earth energy be removed from the northwest.

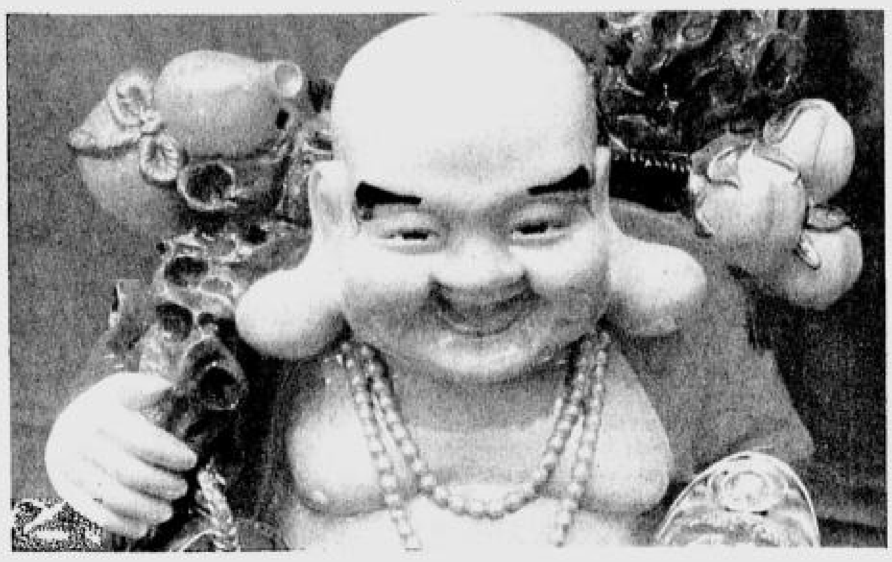
Avoid any digging. "If you dig the five yellow sector, the man of the house will most likely suffer from head, brain and lung injuries, high blood pressure and stroke," Allen said. "Keep the northwest of your house as quiet as possible. As prevention, place a 5-Element Pagoda or Kuan Kung."

From the south sector in 2004, the illness star flies into the east sector this year. This star causes problems to the hands, liver and stomach. To overcome the possibility of illness, especially if your bedroom or front door is placed in the east, Allen suggested hanging six-rod metal wind chimes or placing an 8 Immortal Wu Lou in the eastern part of the house.

To reduce domestic squabbles, one has to overcome the Argumentative Star 3, which flies southeast this year. "Since the year shows strong wood element energy, it's vital to place fire energy in the southeast," Allen said.

TOUGH/ C2

romance and relationships will thrive but it's not exactly a positive year for growth and prosperity



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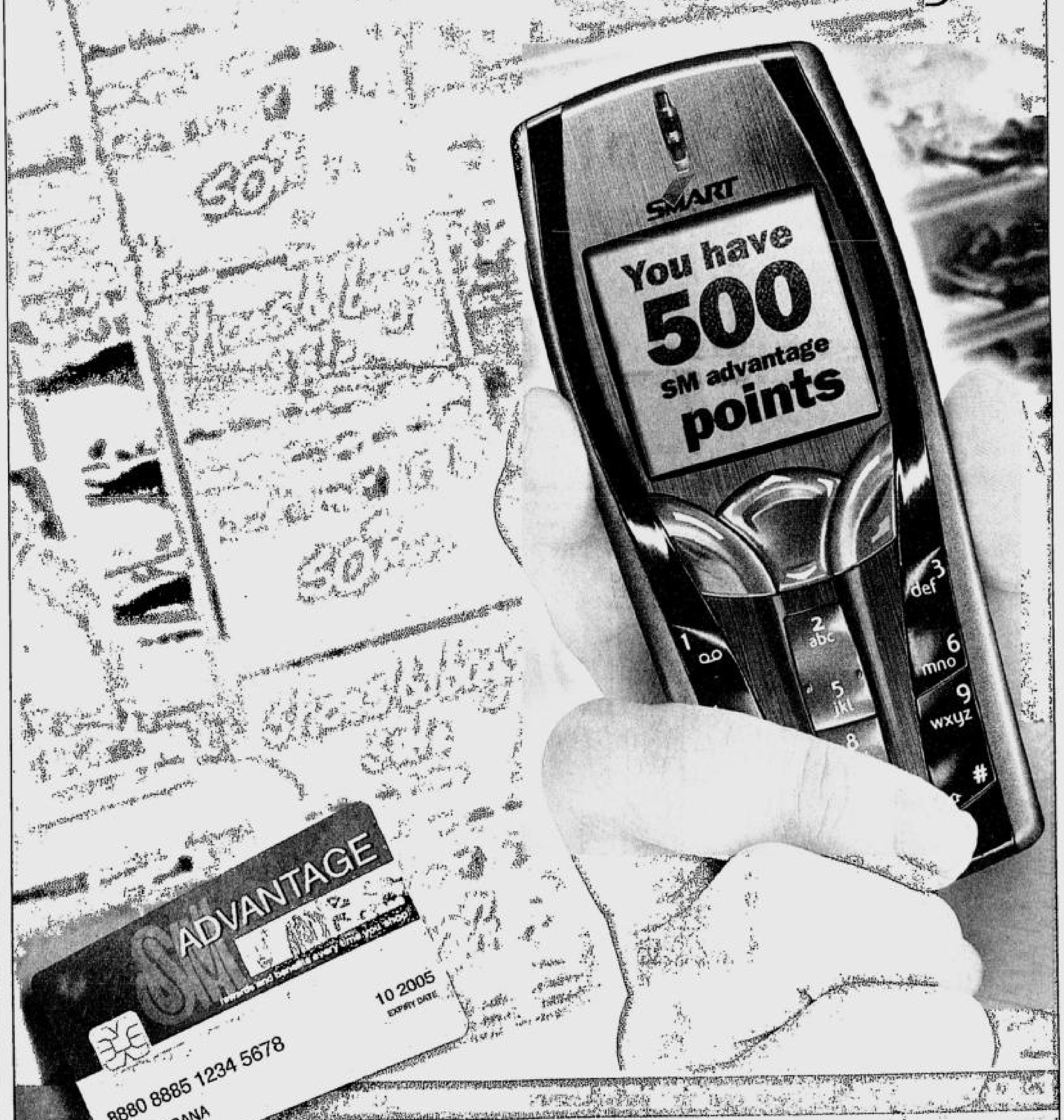

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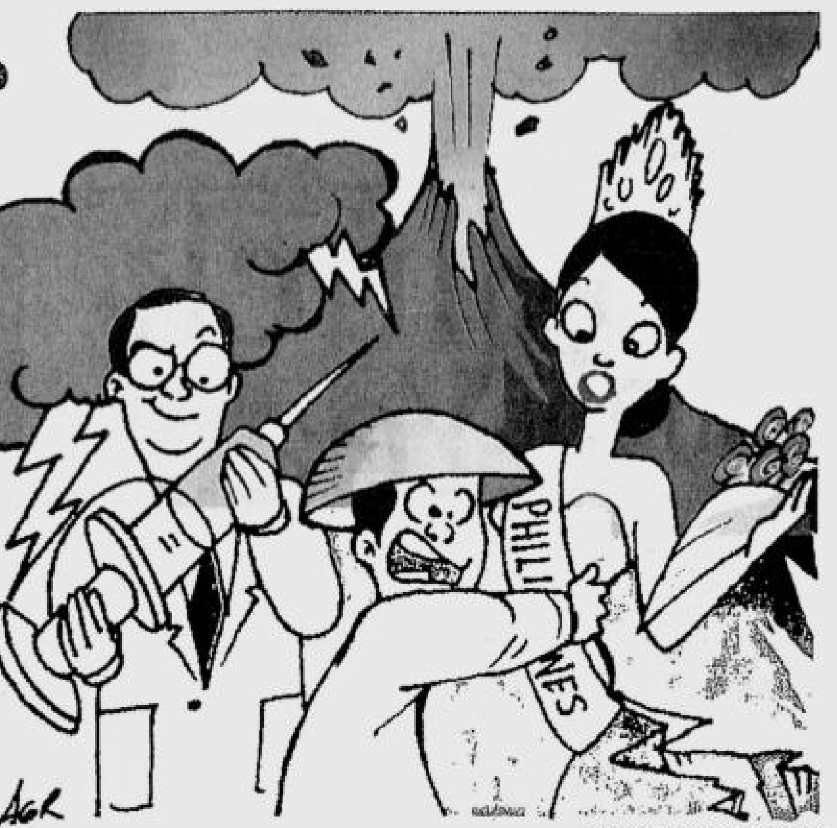


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Anne A. Jambora

"And when the Lamb opened the seventh seal, silence covered the sky."—**Revelations 8:1**

IF fortunetellers are to be believed, the future looks glum for the Philippines in 2005.

The economy might take a turn for the worse (as if that's new), a mass uprising is to be expected, more earthquakes are coming, two veteran actors might meet their demise, two volcanic explosions could occur, plus horrible flash floods, heavy monsoons and drought would sweep across the country if El Niño returned to the Asia Pacific.

Psychic Chat Alejandro's bold predictions could very well be the foreboding words from the book of Revelations leaping to life. Last year's catastrophes and mass destruction are but a sneak preview of the dark days ahead.

Believe them or not, here goes Alejandro's take on 2005 and the coming of the Year of the Wooden Rooster.

- A mass revolt led by former senators Vicente Sotto III and Teresa Aquino-Oreta, Rep. Francis Escudero and Sen. Edgardo Angara will try to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo from Malacañang sometime between May and June. Though the rebellion will be ostensibly spurred by the death of last year's presidential contender Fernando Poe Jr., his living spouse Susan Roces will not approve of the civil disobedience. In her most trying struggle to hold on to her presidency, GMA will still emerge victorious.
- The peso will plunge some more and fall further behind the Malaysian ringgit, the Thai baht, even the Vietnamese dong.
- The devastation of last year's typhoon Winnie was a brutal testament to the country's forest denudation and forsaken forestry laws, but all that will pale in comparison when El Niño makes a comeback in Asia-Pacific. Drought, flash floods and heavy monsoons causing major destruction of lives and property are expected between July and August. Manila will take it hard, as the rush of muddy water floods its streets and destroys homes and lives, dislocating many families.
- Toward the last quarter, an earthquake will wreck Marikina, with widespread destruction rippling toward the west. The culprit, however, would not the tremor, which won't register high on the Richter scale. Poor building construction and weak foundation will account for the mass catastrophe.
- Fire will illuminate the skies in the middle of the year as both Mayon and Taal volcanoes spew deadly lava and raze large swaths of agricultural lands. But while sources of livelihood will be ruined, many lives will be spared.

> An earthquake will wreck Marikina; on a brighter note, a Pinoy will discover the SARS vaccine

- Two veteran actors will get seriously ill, possibly leading to death before 2005 ends. A dramatic actress' health will turn from worse to worst between October to November, as well as that of a comedian between August to September.
- A promising young actor will be involved in a car accident between May and June. He will live, though he may be strapped to the wheelchair for a lifetime.
- Just when scientists and researchers are beginning to find answers to SARS and bird flu, two new plagues worse than dengue and typhus will afflict humans and livestock.
- The Middle East, Southern Japan, US West Coast, South America and China will experience strong, nasty earthquakes during the second and third quarter. The damage will be horrific.
- Pope John Paul II's lingering illness will deteriorate toward the end of summer. But this year may still not be the last for the pontiff.
- A Filipina will once again reign supreme in a major international beauty contest, finally grabbing the highest plum this time.
- A Filipino doctor or scientist will discover the vaccine for SARS.

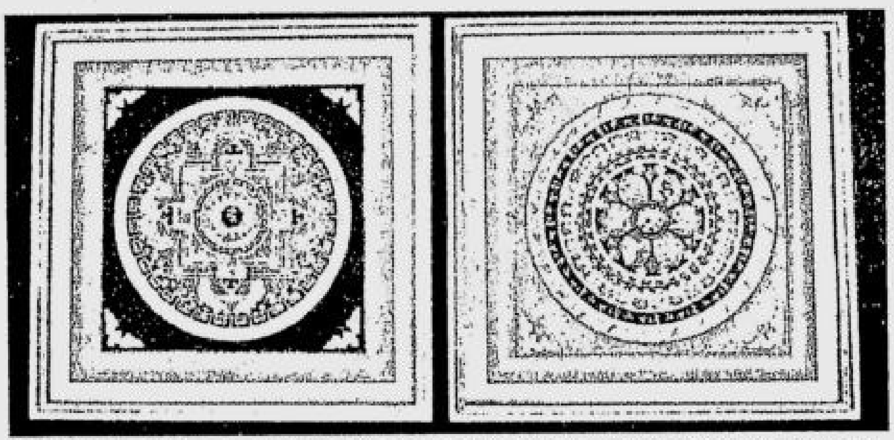
So there! Go ahead, snicker and snort. Whether you laugh them off in disbelief or holler toward the heavens for repentance, those are Alejandro's fearless predictions for 2005.

Alejandro has been reading tarot cards since 1979, and practicing numerology since 1981 and feng shui since 1985.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph.

Tough luck in the Year of the Rooster

From page C1



MANDALA paintings absorb the hostile energy of the Argumentative Star 3, which flies into the southeast sector of the house this year.

3 CHI LINS overcome the possibility of illness hitting your home.

"Keep this corner brightly lit or paint one wall with bright red. Other good remedies are red triangular crystal, Mandala painting and laughing Buddha."

Relationships

The year 2005 is the second year of period 8, Allen said. Eight is an infinity symbol, which is positive. Green Star 4, another positive sign, has entered into the center palace, bringing peach blossom luck. So if you're unmarried, Allen said, you can easily start a love relationship or have the chance to get married.

Keep the center of your home activated with love symbols like double happiness, peony, mandarin ducks and love birds, Allen said.

If you're married, you can protect your marriage from extramarital affairs by displaying at least six smooth round crystal balls with the same or different colors, Allen said.

"The most important thing to understand is that feng shui is really about the energy that's surrounding you in your personal space," said Allen, feng shui practitioner for 12 years now. "The structures around you also emanate energy and if they are placed in a harmonious fashion based on feng shui guidelines, you attract good energy, good fortune and good luck."

From Rat to Rabbit

According to Allen, 2005 is a year when a person born in the Year of the Rat can make good gains in rank, status and position, with opportunities to make money as well. So it's important to place either a metal Ru Yi on the work desk or an image of Kuan Kung in the living room to realize your good fortune. Also keep a Jade Qui Ren to ensure support from colleagues.

This is not the year for the Ox person to take risks, make foolhardy decisions or jump into new ventures without thorough strategizing. Avoid gambling and big investments. Wearing amulets such as the 9-Eyed DZI will protect you to some extent. Display an image of the rooster carrying a coin to ensure support from your peers. But as far as romance is concerned, the stars of the year are in your favor. This is a good year for the single Ox to tie the knot.

There is violence in the chart of a Tiger person so it's important for him to be careful at all times. The Tiger has little money luck this year so he should watch out for his finances and avoid liberal spending sprees. He should wear protective amulets like the Secret Dragon to empower his work. He should place a set of Allies and Friends figurines on the work table to keep networking energy at its peak.

Rabbit people are in conflict with the Grand Duke Jupiter this year. Misfortune comes in the form of diseases and accidents. They should carry the Tai Sui coin at all times to make sure they keep out of harm's way. As there's a risk of health problems, they should wear the Medicine Dzi beads at all times.

5-ELEMENT Pagoda should be placed in the northwest part of the home to cure the Deadly Five Yellow misfortune.

PI YAO helps overcome misfortune caused by Grand Duke Jupiter.

From Dragon to Sheep

It's is an average year for Dragon people. Problems will stem mainly from heated tempers and frustrating squabbles. They'll suffer from stress, high blood pressure and physical exhaustion. This is a year for them to garner relationship luck by keeping a Peach Blossom Animal, the Rooster, next to their bed. Or carry a Peach Aventurine carving of Wor Peng or a pyramid-like red-colored crystal with a triangular base at all times.

For Snake people, most troubles will stem from dealings with people, misunderstandings in relationships and legal dilemmas or minor brushes with the law. But Snakes have ample wealth and financial luck in their chart this year. They should display a triangular red crystal in the southeast corner of their home and office table to ensure peace and harmonious relationships. For wealth-creating energy, they should hang three pieces of Period 8 Bird in the south corner of the bedroom.

This promises to be a fulfilling year for those born in the Year of the Horse. Allen said, "You have windfall luck that comes in the form of lottery winnings or bonus income from deal-making, moonlighting and being at the right place at the right time." Horses should energize their lucky star by hanging 3 Period 8 Birds in the south. To enhance relationships, they should display Peach Blossom Animal, the Rabbit, next to their bed.

For Sheep people, the stars promise to bring money and wealth luck as well as new opportunities in work and business. They should display the White Tribute Horse carrying bags of crystal chips in the south corner of the living room. They should wear the 6-Eyed Dzi bracelet to keep bad chi away.

From Monkey to Boar

A Monkey person should wear the 15-Eyed Dzi bead, which activates the kind of luck that brings opportunities, business deals and big breaks. He should display the Gold Colored Rooster carrying a coin in its beak in the west corner to boost his networking luck.

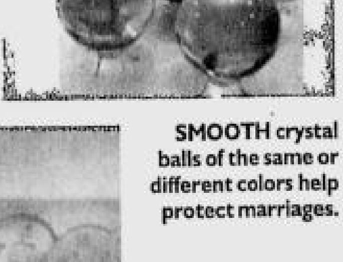
A Rooster person will have more than his fair share of material rewards. He will be adequately inspired at the intellectual level as well. He should carry the Secret Dragon Charm and Tai Sui Coin at all times.

There is promise of love for the Dog-born person this year and matters of the heart will tend to go better than business and career matters. Place Large Tortoise in the north corner of your home to enhance your career. Make sure you tap into the luck of your Allies and Friends for assistance and help.

February brings danger of money losses for the Boar, particularly in gambling or speculation, so he should avoid playing the stock market or the casino. For career luck, he should hang a painting of the 100 Birds in the bedroom or office. To convert all bad luck into good fortune, he should carry 3 Color Dzi bead at all times.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

KUAN Kung, which should be placed in the living room, helps you realize your good fortune.



SMOOTH crystal balls of the same or different colors help protect marriages.

MARITES Allen

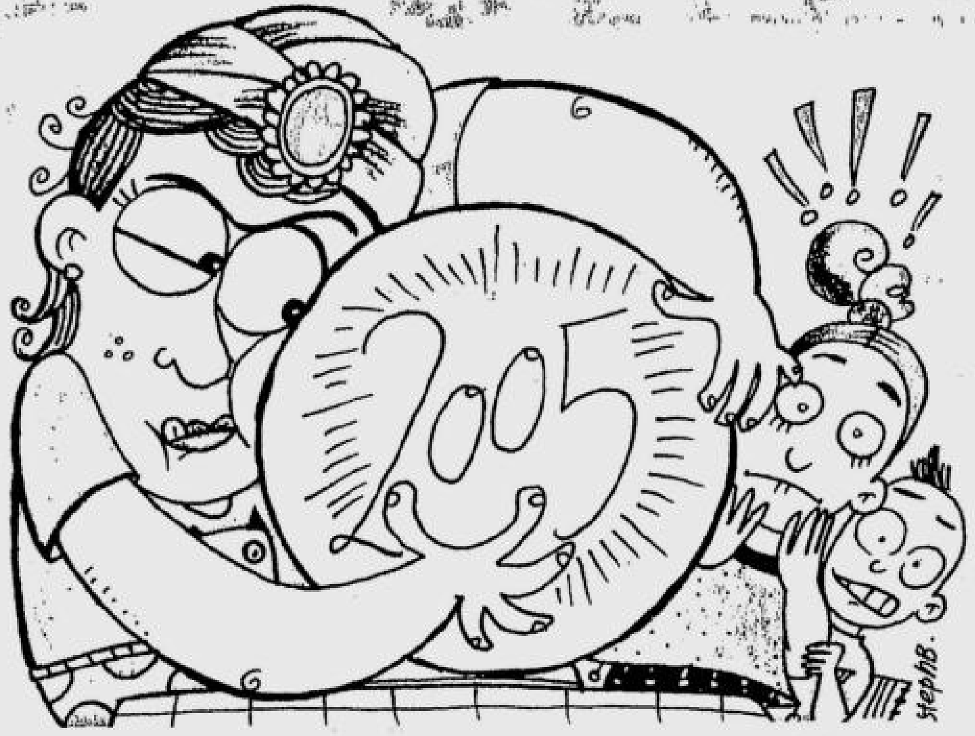


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Misfortune teller

By Pam Pastor

PLAZA Miranda was as busy as ever. Vendors were hawking colorful plastic bags and cheap toys and shoppers were rushing to climb into jeepneys, dodging the firecrackers set off by noisy children. Just a few steps away, lining one side of Quiapo church, was a row of fortunetellers. Some were old, some young; some were male, a lot were female, and those who weren't busy reading palms were calling out to passersby, offering a look into their future.

Madam Lita was younger than most of the Quiapo fortunetellers. She smiled as she whipped out her tarot cards.

"It's the Year of the Rooster, we need to work hard and pray because the crisis will continue," she said in the vernacular.

She said prices of commodities would continue to go up.

"There will be a lot of family problems, spouses cheating because of temptations. Judgment day is near, that's why temptations are all around," she added.

Dismal

Madam Lita continued laying down the cards. "There might be a volcanic eruption and an earthquake, but we would recover."

The predictions remained dismal. "There will be chaos. I pity the President, a lot of people will go against her. Members of the NPA will come out, prisoners will also cause trouble."

Madam Lita repeatedly talked about a continuing crisis but kept saying that prayers would help us get through it.

She kept stressing that people would rebel against President Arroyo. She also had negative predictions for Filipinos abroad.

"Some people abroad will be imprisoned," she continued, "and there will be Filipinos who will get hurt in disasters in other countries, in bombings and accidents. But people will remain stubborn. A lot of them will still go abroad."

There will be a shift in male-female roles in 2005, she said. "Women will become the breadwinners instead of men."

Celebrity couples will have a tough time next year, according to her. "Many celebrity couples will split up."

She said she also sees a lot of deaths in the coming year. Madam Lita continued stressing the importance of prayer in facing 2005.

She set all the cards down and leaned back, indicating that she was done. It was time to go back to the present, because Madam Lita, the clairvoyant, sure made the present seem so much brighter than tomorrow.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

Disney princesses in ice spectacle

THE MOST exciting ice spectacle to hit Manila, "Disney On Ice presents Princess Classics," runs at the Araneta Coliseum until Jan. 3.

Be enchanted by Disney's seven princesses—Cinderella, Jasmine, Ariel, Sleeping Beauty, Belle, Mulan and Snow White—as they appear together in a live production for the first time to share the most dramatic moments of their stories spanning more than seven decades.

"Disney On Ice Presents Princess Classics" is a tale of triumph against evil using the strength of heart, humor and hope, as told through the eyes of these seven princesses.

The Araneta Coliseum stage is transformed into a bejeweled, three-story revolving castle that changes dramatically as audiences travel around the world—from Cinderella's kingdom, to the city of Agrabah where Jasmine lives, to Mulan's China and Ariel's underwater kingdom.

An international troupe of more than 40 award-winning figure skaters take to the ice under the helm of world-renowned choreographers Tom Dickson, who was named Choreographer of the Year by the Professional Skaters Association and the United States Professional Figure Skating Association in 2002, and his wife Catarina Lindgren, a former Olympian.

For this 23rd production of "Disney On Ice," the couple incorporates the current international phenomenon of synchronized skating into the high-impact choreography of Disney's Princess Classics. Dickson and Lindgren guide a team consisting of more than half of the cast in performing fast-paced, highly detailed maneuvers in exact precision to create unique formations on the ice.

Adding to the dazzling display are the costumes by award-winning Broadway designer Gregg Barnes: Taking hundreds of yards of sheer fabric, sequins and glitter, Barnes makes each Disney princess shine from within.

SEA princess Ariel in "The Little Mermaid"

"Disney On Ice Presents Princess Classics" will have performances until tomorrow.

Tickets are priced at P1,215 (VIP), P1,000 (patron and lower box), P790 (upper box A premium), P580 (upper box A), P320 (upper box B) and P105 (general admission) and are now available at all SM Ticketnet outlets and at the Araneta Box-Office.

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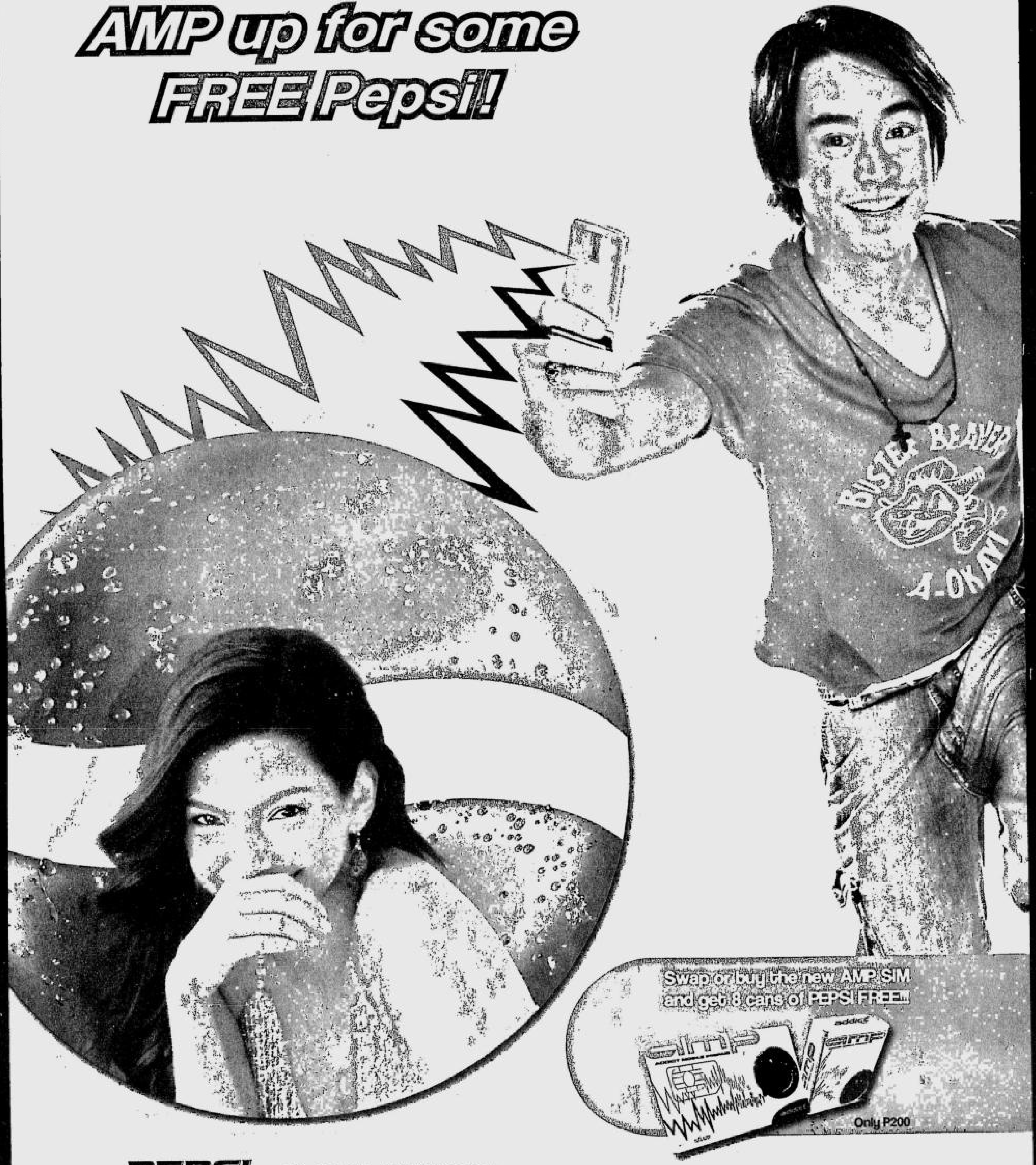

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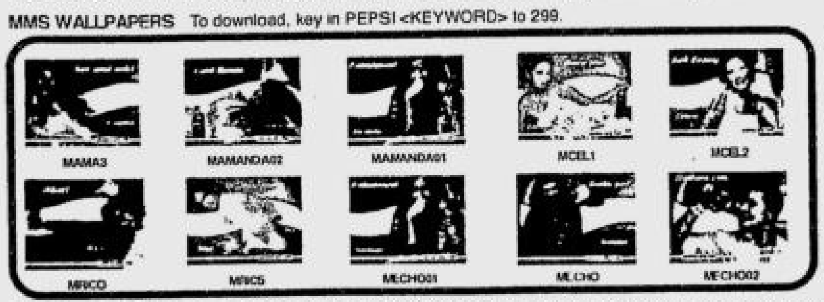

RINGTONES Text MONO or POLY <keyword> to 286.

ARTIST	TITLE	KEYWORD
Rivermaya	Liwanag sa Dilim (Kaya Mo 'To!)	LIWANAG
	A Love To Share	LUV2SHARE
	Sunday Driving	SUNDRIVE
	Umaaraw Umuulan	ARAWULAN
	Balisong	BALISONG
Jennifer Lopez	Ain't It Funny	FUNNY
	If You Had My Love	IFUHADMYLUV
	Jenny From the Block	JENYFRMDBLCK
	Let's Get Loud	GETLOUD
	Play	PLAY
Beyonce	Baby Boy	BABYBOY
	Crazy in Love	CRAZYINLUV
Ricky Martin	Livin' La Vida Loca	LAVIDALOCA
	She Bangs	SHE BANGS

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ARTIST	TITLE	RING ID
Rivermaya	Liwanag sa Dilim (Kaya Mo 'To!)	101258
	A Love To Share	100126
	Umaaraw Umuulan	100140
	Balisong	100897
South Border	Playa	100613
	The Show	100614
Beyonce	Baby Boy	101468
	Crazy In Love	101467
Ricky Martin	Livin' La Vida Loca	101513
	She Bangs	101516

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Mara again, naturally

PLAYTIME

By the Staff

PHOTOS: ROGER CARPIO

> The human body is like a Rolls Royce. It should have the finest food, but we sort of batter it with the worst food because it's convenient

AFTER 11 years of advocating for organic food and running an organic restaurant, called The Source, and an organic market, Mara Pardo de Tavera says it's a good sign that other organic markets have sprouted in the city.

Now she's contemplating another level: a café that will serve organic tea and coffee and double as an organic wine bar. She's currently looking for investors.

Her commitment to the cause is relentless. While there are now vegetarian restaurants that offer nothing but veggies, she says one can't be assured the vegetables are organic. In her case, she won't spray vegetables with pesticides. "I'm the one who makes people aware that if you have an *uod* in your vegetable you should be happy," she says. "If that *uod* lives, it's an indication you will also live. It's the absence of life that should worry you."

She recommends using extra virgin coconut oil instead of the imported Canola Oil which, she says, comes from rape seed that was used for paint before, was genetically modified for human consumption and was marketed even before being tried and tested for at least three generations.

Mara's concerns extend to the preservation of the environment—like rice terraces—and tradition—like *panucha*. She is among the founders of the local branch of the Slow Food Movement, an international counteraction to the ever-growing fast-food craze.

How do you define "organic"?

Organic is food or produce that is grown or produced without any use of synthetic chemicals. That's the basic definition. It's a tough call because our life can be so harassed and hurried and fast-paced.

So, even if it's not free-range chicken, for example, if it's not injected with commercial feed...

It's still better than the commercial ones.

Are free-range chicken organic?

Yeah, because free-range just means it's running around there and eating insects and bugs, which is good. You know, God did not create chickens to eat bones of cows or pork or the meat of other chickens. They're only meant to eat insects and plants. They don't even go by the sea and catch fish, right?

Or how about cows? Cows don't go around biting a pig, right? They'll just eat grass and grains. They're really vegetarians. And pigs are not really carnivorous either, unless they're trained. But what's happening in the world now is, when you kill a cow, about 30 percent of the weight of that cow—the bones, and the hooves and the parts that are not edible or people do not want to eat—are pulverized and made into feeds.

That's really the root of Mad Cow Disease. They had these sheep that they knew already in England had brain disease. Of course, the veterinarian said a disease in one species would not cross over to another species. That was true before antibiotics. So they started feeding cows these commercial feeds of dried sheep stuff. It was dried with high heat so they thought *patay na yung* germs. But *pumunta sa cow at pumunta sa tao*. What is the connection among the three? Antibiotics.

Are there standards to let people know they are buying truly organic foods?

There are international standards for food and produce, even for fiber and furnishing. There's an organization in Europe called IFOAM, or the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements. Once a year they have a huge international fair, around March or end of February. And if you go there, it's not just food. It's everything from food and drinks, cheese and wine to textiles, fiber, cosmetics—everything.

So there's a whole range of products that are available?

There's a whole range, and that's what I'd like to bring into this market also. Including some imported ones—not because I'm colonial-minded—but because if you have these imported products, other people will see it and say, *"Kaya ko 'yan ah, magagawa ko rin yan."* And it will sort of jumpstart the food industry, the textile industry or the furnishing industry to create products that are more natural and organic.

Are you involved in informing people what to watch out for?

I'm setting up a website so I'll have like a question-and-answer there, because a lot of times, people come to me and say, "What should I do, I have *anay* but I don't like to spray?" I have become like an information center, and I'm not able to do it for everybody as much as I'd like to. So I feel that starting the website—and people being able to write to that website and ask their questions wherever they are—might be able to help them.

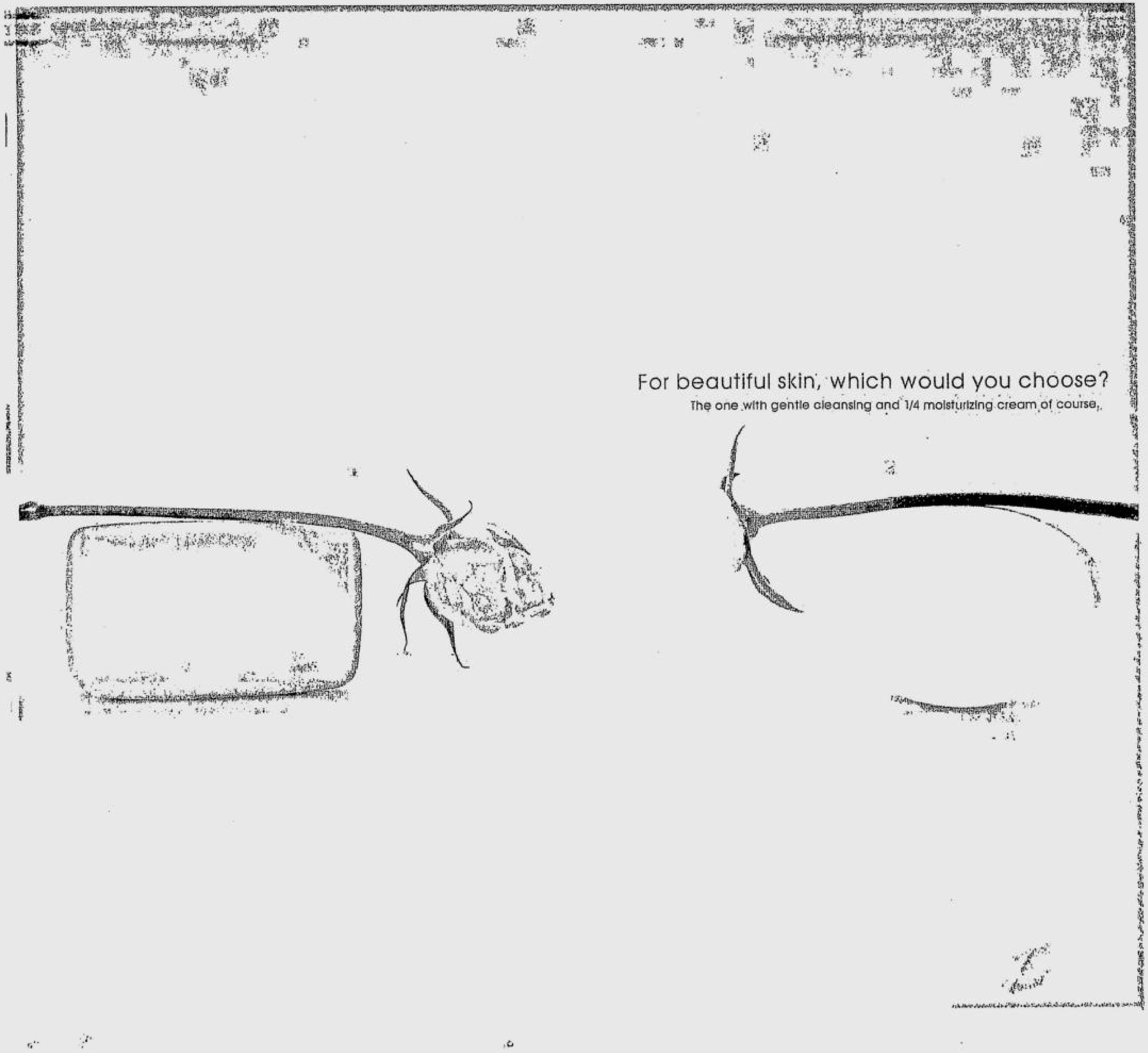
How do you react to people who say organic food is (1) expensive and (2) tasteless?

Well, the tasteless part really depends on the cooking style. When I had my restaurant, my point was to prove to people that organic didn't mean tasteless. It's really how well they are cooked.

There's a restaurant in Washington called Nora, and there's another in San Francisco called Greens. Those two restaurants that I know of only serve organic foods—meats, wine, desserts, the whole range of gourmet food. When I went to Nora's, it cost us about $75 with wine. That was expensive. And yet, the booking in that restaurant was two weeks in advance. So obviously, there's something going right for them.

Organic is expensive because we're only reaching out to, I feel, probably less than half of one percent of the market in Manila. If that increases to one percent, I could lower my price. Also, right now, we don't get any funding assistance from anybody. All the farmers are self-sufficient. If you're a commercial farmer you could go to the Department of Agriculture or a seed bank, and say, "I have one hectare, I want to plant corn." And they

MARA/ D2


For beautiful skin, which would you choose?
The one with gentle cleansing and 1/4 moisturizing cream of course.

Mara again, naturally

From page D1

give you seeds that you can pay for after you've harvested.

We don't have any of that. Also, ours entails a lot of labor because we have to go down, check the plants manually 'cause we don't spray chemicals. And then, on top of that, because we don't put fertilizer or hormones to create an abundance in the yield, if in a commercial farm one hectare comes out with 1,000 kilos of something, ours will only be 500. So, right away, there's a difference in the price.

Does organic farming take longer?

It takes a little bit longer, like rice, for example. The mountain-grown rice would take 150 days, sometimes 160 days, whereas the hybrid rice only takes 120. So already you have a 30 to 40-day, sometimes 50-day, difference. That's a big difference in terms of profitability.

You said your market is only less than 50 percent of 1 percent. Why is this so even after 11 years?

MPT: You know, when I started 11 years ago, we had like four tables, we sold out in two hours. And of course, that steadily increased.

But you have a lot more suppliers and a bigger market now.

Yeah, and I'm even thinking—another plan that I've been working on for about a year now—is a school. An organic school that will teach the whole thing. from farming to cooking the food, but basically with the farmers.

What's happening to the farmers is—and this is whether they are commercial or organic—48 percent of our population is made up of farmers, and they produce all our food. But they just don't manage their farms and their businesses well because they've never had any training in business—how to deal with bonds, how to do with marketing, etc. So they are at the mercy of traders and middlemen. One of the things they need to do is to create pools of farm managers.

How many farmers do you already have?

MPT: Well, if I stretch it all out, from the NGOs to all the group that I work with, *siguro* 1,000.

How many organic farming-related NGOs are there?

MPT: There are many NGOs, I don't even work with all of them. There are many associations that have been formed. I actually formed one, but I took myself out of it because we had differences in principles. I'm deemed as a purist. I'm deemed as strict. Well, yes, I am, because I feel if I'm going to say it's organic, it really has to be organic. It can't be, "*O sige*, I'm going to use antibiotic one time because my poor cow's gonna die."

For me, okay, use antibiotic on your cow one time, but don't sell that product anymore as organic because then it's already tainted. I have customers who have reactions to antibiotics. And, you know, they say that if you don't use that animal for a month, two months, then *pwede* na because you've washed out the antibiotics. That's not true. Antibiotics accumulate in the fatty tissues of animals and stay there.

When we catch a cold, we're taking antibiotics, when we drink milk, there's antibiotics in that milk already. When we eat meat, the pork and the chicken have been given antibiotics, so their fatty tissues have antibiotics in them, and every time you're eating those things—dairy products, cream—you are overloading your system with antibiotics.

Given the choice between meeting immediate hunger and a probable threat 20 years from now, wouldn't you choose to feed the world first?

What's our population right now? 70 million?

Eighty-two.

Okay, we have 82 million people. But have you traveled the countryside? When you just drive around there, you don't feel that 80 million hovering around you, right? The feeling is *kulang ng tao*. And what does that indicate? Well, one indication is not enough people work in the fields. We have 48 percent, but not all 48 percent want to work the fields. *Parang* they want to come to Manila. In Visayas, they all want to go to Cebu. In Mindanao, they all want to go to Davao. You know, to the urban centers.

And why do they want to do that? Because they need better income, a better quality of life. So what we need to do is provide farmers with a better quality of life. That's why, for me, organic is one way they can get a better price and a better income. The problem is they're not earning enough. That's why the same 48 percent that are farmers are the same 48 percent that you call the poorest of the poor.

About feeding the world, You know it's really in the distribution. Because we really have enough land to support our 80-million plus population. We do. It's just that we don't manage it well. How come big corporations, let's say Dole, how come they manage their resources so well? Because it's professionally managed, from their financing to human resources to natural resources, to the lab. The whole planning is in place.

I have this problem even with my farmers. From December all the way to March, I'm going to have an oversupply of carrots. You know, if I can only make carrot cake, carrot jam, carrot anything, I'd make it because they're oversupplying me.

I'll tell them, "Okay, send me 200 kilos," and they send me 500 because they've overplanted. It's not like, you know, in North American countries or in Europe where there is a board that oversees the commodity. This group is already planting so many carrots, so don't plant that much. And let's make it little here, little here, little here. So every month there'd be carrots of certain amounts consistently. Not *biglaan* where you have a *bukid* of carrots, you know.

Our poor farmers get abused because they have a whole mountain of carrots and they probably need to sell those carrots about P10 per kilo to make money, to make *bawi* their expenses. The trader will come and say, "*Ang dami niyan. O sige, bibilhin ko sa'yo* for P5." They have to sell or else that pile will rot there.

What's not enough is the distribution system. What's not enough is the farm-to-market roads, which is being eaten by C5 and corruption.

We also have this ridiculous system where groceries, restaurants, hotels don't pay you till 190 days. When you eat at a restaurant, you pay with a credit card. Let's say you pay P1,000. The restaurant claims the money from the bank, whatever bank that card is. They get the money within the week. But they don't pay the farmers until after 120 days.

For Asians, the critical supply is rice. The problem if you plant rice organically is it's slow-growing.

It's slow-growing, yes. But, you know, in the Philippines we have a lot of rain. Like right now, *baha sa* Bulacan, right? But in the Mountain Province, tamang-tama lang ang weather. And yet, it gets backlogged because when the farmers come down from the mountains to get down to Manila, they can't anymore. I have a shipment of rice coming and my rice was delayed because of the rain. They got held back somewhere.

So it's back to scheduling. We should learn how to schedule around disasters or weather calamities.

When it's rainy season in Luzon, I run to Mindanao and get produce from them. Mindanao, actually, has so much more land and other things to offer, it's just that it's not so peaceful, and it's hard to be stable and consistent there. If they had better financing for their region, I think they will be able to supply enough food for the whole country.

When it's rainy season in Mindanao, we can go to the Mountain Province *naman*. It's really a matter of distribution and scheduling.

'All the bugs had gone to the organic rice. Insects are intelligent. They know the better rice. They didn't go to the commercial rice. One's nutritious, the other one *amoy* chemicals'

What about prices? Don't we keep trying to produce as much rice as possible to keep the price of rice low?

You can buy rice outside for P20 a kilo of hybrid rice or rice from Thailand probably mga P20-P30 per kilo. But it's treated already. The mountain rice that I bring down from the Sagada area I sell for P70 per kilo. Big difference in price, right? But the rice that's P20, that's not taking into account the cost of the destruction to the environment, the cost of the destruction to health. That's separate.

Pero my P70 rice, when you eat that, you're helping save the environment, you're helping the farmers have a better livelihood, you're also helping save your own health. For me, it's cheaper.

I give you my own example. I'm 50 years old. I don't take any medication. I haven't taken antibiotics in 30 years. I haven't even taken an aspirin in 30 years since I started eating organically. I don't have any major health issues. I don't even go to the doctor.

I feel I'm living proof that if you eat organic, yeah, it's more expensive upfront but then I don't have all the expenses of medication and running to so many doctors for tests. For me, it's cheaper in the long run because I don't have those issues. My sons, who have grown up in this lifestyle—my oldest is 20, my second is 18, my youngest is 13—have never had antibiotics.

Can they eat out with their friends? Can they eat fast-food? (Laughter)

Now, they can eat whatever they want. But when they do, they don't feel good. They'll go for French fries. But they choose where because they've already learned that Canola oil makes them sick like me.

'I haven't taken antibiotics in 30 years. I haven't even taken an aspirin since I started eating organically. I don't even go to the doctor... I'm living proof that if you eat organic, it's more expensive upfront but then you don't have to spend for medication and doctors'

How were you introduced to the organic lifestyle to begin with?

It's such a long story. I'd have to say it began with my grandmother, because we lived in this place in Quezon City that looked like probinsiya. We had a fish pond, she had a farm, she grew her own food...

My mother was a doctor, but she wasn't also so much into buying drugs. Every time we were sick, she would go along with our grandmother and not give us antibiotics. The most she would do was, she'd give us antibiotics for two days, because she said after that, it's doing nothing for your body.

Then I studied hotel and restaurant management in Europe, so that gave me more insight into food as a healing source for the body. And then I lived in New York where I started to be more consumer-oriented, you know, really looking at ingredients.

I also read books. I have a huge library of all these things that I've read and I go to a lot of workshops and listen to a lot of people, and most of my knowledge is really working for myself. And my ex-husband had an ailment also that kind of scared me because he was eating a lot of red meat and when I read about it, it was the stress of that kind of diet that created the illness. So we really had to research on the food. He's still alive today, despite the fact that doctors then told him he might not live to be 30. He's now over 50. So, you are what you eat. And every cell in your body is produced by what you eat.

It's like a car. If you had a Rolls Royce, and you put really bad diesel gasoline in the car, the car wouldn't work as well. The human body is like a Rolls Royce. It should have the finest food, but we sort of batter it with the worst food because it's convenient.

Are you a vegetarian?

No, I eat chicken, but free-range chicken.

You know the free-range chicken and the coconut oil for cooking, that's how they eat in the countryside, *di ba*?

Yes, but we kind of lost it as a people. It's funny that we always go for the new things. I like American culture, but American culture really kind of destroys that tradition, because we've started to go for convenience, fast food, more American diets. During the Spanish era, *nadagdagan tayo ng* Spanish-type foods, *pero* we still had the traditional fare, and it was maintained.

When you get invited to other people's homes, what do you eat?

I eat what's there, but I choose. I wouldn't eat chicken. Or sometimes *naman*, if it's summer season, *baka* the fish served *mas marami* pang pollutants, or was caught through dynamite fishing. I'd rather have the chicken with a little antibiotic.

You won't make a fuss? (Laughter)

I won't go somewhere and say, "I don't eat like this so give me this special diet." No, I never do. Even on the plane, I'll just look and choose what's there. I used to be fussier and it didn't get me anywhere.

People just got turned off, and they wouldn't even listen to what I had to say.

Were you considered weird.

Yeah, well, I'm considered weird. I accept it. I am weird. (laughter)

Tell us about your oxygenated pool.

Oh yeah, I just moved to a house which has a pool. I like swimming, I like to exercise that way, but I don't like the chlorine. And when I got this house with a pool, I didn't realize until I talked with the pool guy that they put muriatic acid, aside from chlorine! I was shocked!

I said, oh God! Maybe that's why my eyes got burned. For two days *ang hapdi-hapdi ng mata ko*.

We just set up the oxygenated pool recently, and we checked all the balance and this and that. I don't exactly know what it means, but the technician said it had 16,000 parts per million of oxygen, which he said was excellent. It should be *mga* 14,000, but mine was better na. Optimum. And you know my water, it's been raining a lot, *nagbagyo pa nga*, yet my pool is crystal-clear because of a filtering process. It's a fairly new process. It's like in the oxygen bars in L.A. and Beverly Hills?

Is it expensive?

Yes, more expensive, because of the filter thing. But again, for me, I want to use my pool as often as I can and I don't want to have problems. You know that your skin is your largest organ, so when you jump into that chlorine and muriatic acid pool, it's going straight to your other organs. And if it enters the pores, the first organ it will hit is your kidney, because it's where liquids are processed. And from my research, I found out that a lot of swimmers have kidney problems because they swim everyday.

Mountain rice doesn't keep well...

The best way to keep mountain rice is to put it in the refrigerator or freezer. It's the box eh. You know, there was an experiment where they put organic rice here and commercial rice here, and in the middle they put a bunch of weevils, *yung* bugs *na kumakain*. *Pagbukas nila*, all the bugs had gone to the organic rice. Insects are intelligent. They know by instinct which is the better rice. They didn't go to the commercial rice. One's nutritious, the other one amoy chemicals.

If you're making carrot cake, what kind of sugar would you use?

Brown sugar. Muscovado. Not that brown, because the light brown still goes through a bleaching process, and then they put molasses to make it brown. You know muscovado in coffee tastes so much tastier. The only thing is, if you put it in dessert, everything is brown. But it's just a mindset. Brown is beautiful. Aren't we brown?

You know panucha? It's another nice sugar, at par with muscovado but just a little bit harder to handle. I put it in a jar with water and let it melt down. I didn't heat it. And then it began to be syrupy. So I just get that syrup and mix it with my juices. And you know that other sugar we've lost? It's the *matamis na bao*, which Malaysia has. It's also a thriving business in Thailand. They call it palm sugar.

Does organic also apply to cosmetics?

Oh, yes. In the organic store that I want to open, I would like to have that. There's a company that produces cosmetics, Avida, which has an outlet in Hong Kong and in Singapore. I went with Avida for a while because I was involved with this certification group in the US. It was the group that certified Avida products, so we were working very closely with them and they were patterning their products on two brands that I knew of in Europe. They were quite successful.

What about organic soap?

Meron na din soap. Locally, there are two people I know that produce it. One is this Para Natura. The lady behind it is Patty Araneta. What they did was replace caustic soda, a necessary ingredient for soap-making but one that can burn the skin, with simple wood ash. Same with handmade paper, because they also use caustic soda, so you just have to change it to wood ash.

Are they using organic materials for fabric now?

Yes. When people have cancer, one of the things they are told by wholistic doctors is to use only natural fibers. Synthetic fibers don't breathe. The problem *naman sa* fabric is there are so many chemicals in the dye. And it doesn't take just one washing to remove that.

The fabric that's so hot now—it has been for the last seven years—is made of marijuana! There are two species of marijuana. One is used for fabric. Did you know that the Constitution of the United States was printed on hemp paper? The sailing mast of the galleon ships were made of hemp. The first Levi's jeans were made of hemp fabric. So it was a major cash crop in the Old world, and it was so big that agriculture was really leaning on marijuana for paper. If we had stuck to marijuana as a source of paper, we would. still have our forests.

What about iodized salt?

You know, we are an archipelago, which means we have a wealth of sea salt. We can make so much. France is a producer of one of the best sea salts in the world, and it's not even an archipelago. We could produce that kind of great sea salt, but they made a law that even sea salt should now be iodized. To be intelligent, you have to iodize your salt. God, that's not being intelligent, that's being dumb. Sea salt has all the minerals our body needs. Sea salt and blood have the same chemical analysis.

If we take that little bit of sea salt every day, it could be great for our nutrition. But when you take iodized salt, it's concentrated sodium, with pharmaceutically made iodine because *inalis na nila lahat yung* natural iodine. That's not good for you.

Sea salt is really excellent. It's one of those things that we produce naturally. The sea salt that I sell in the market comes from Ilocos Norte. It's rock salt, but the *fino* variety.

How has the slow food movement taken off here?

Well, I have to say as a group we are slow. I'd like it to move a little faster, but there are so few members right now that are really committed to this. Unfortunately, we're all in transition.

What we want to do is create slow food tours. That's one of our ambitions. We already have sort of a thing like this in place in Lipa, Batangas. But we'd like to do it in other provinces. It's like an educational thing, when you go on tour, you'd learn about traditional fare and how they're prepared. We'd like to back them up with recipes.

Is slow food necessarily organic?

Very much so.

How can people keep healthy without having to spend so much?

I realize everybody has to survive, and sometimes a couple—husband and wife—have to work. So, in my mind, what I'd like to do is to create this organic food-to-go so people who are busy can buy their food there. I'd also like to create a pool of cooks that can be hired to prepare food in people's homes. I also want to teach them how to cook.

We also have restaurants that are willing to work with us. "What dishes would you like to get from your menu and make slow food, and how would this be slow food?" Then we'll have to sit down with them and say, not white rice but traditional rice, not regular iodized salt but sea salt, not white sugar but brown sugar. You know, all these little quirks that make the food more of a slow-food variety. It's not just slow cooking.

Time for Plan B

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

HOW does one rescue a planet under stress and a civilization in trouble? That may seem like an impossible task but there are ways to do it.

One possibility is Plan B, proposed by Lester R. Brown. He is the author of "Plan B—Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble."

Friends in the Asia-Pacific Roundtable for Sustainable Consumption and Production suggested we read it to understand better why business/economics and the ecology must now have a common goal.

Plan B, says Brown, is the shift from Plan A, which basically means "business as usual." For years now, he says, governments and their experts found Plan A the easiest solution to major problems. After a calamity has passed or a problem is resolved somewhat, it becomes "business as usual."

But that can no longer be so given the current state of world ecology. Hence, Plan B. It is, you might say, a contingency or fall-back plan. And it is too important to dismiss as "impossible" to achieve.

Bubble economy

As humans wander through the third millennium, Plan A is becoming less and less feasible. It was easy enough, say, 50 years ago, post WWII, to go back to the way things were.

But that's no longer the case. The economy has become a bubble that may burst soon. This bubble economy is the result of people's desire to satisfy their excessive demands by consuming the earth's natural assets.

Brown says it is a bubble economy because "we are taking more out of the earth than it can give on an ongoing basis… We are cutting trees faster than they can rejuvenate, overgrazing rangelands and converting them into deserts, over-pumping acquifers and draining rivers dry… We are taking fish from the ocean faster than they can reproduce."

At the moment, these acts seem to solve problems at hand, to meet the big demands for those products. But it is becoming increasingly apparent that the so-called solutions are themselves the problems.

If economies seem to be booming, it's only because responsible people are turning a blind eye—and deaf ear—to what is really happening. Brown, a pioneer of the concept of "sustainable development," points out that the world is fast losing its natural resources.

Saying the same things

Our own environmentalists have been saying the same things over and over. The only difference is that they haven't mentioned any Plan B.

Brown has data to prove his points, and what tales of horror (or imminent horror) they tell! The founder and president of The Earth Policy Institute, a nonprofit, interdisciplinary research organization based in Washington, D.C., is most persuasive as he warns of food and water shortages, each inevitably affecting the other. Two important challenges that farmers are facing now, says Brown, are rising temperatures and falling water tables.

Hot temperatures are being felt as never before as indicated by the rapid way lands are drying up and the way deserts are expanding (desertification). Falling water tables lead to the use of high-powered water pumps, making over-pumping dangerously commonplace.

The effects on agriculture, says Brown, are best exemplified by the case of China. The country's vast land area, once considered one of its major assets, is rapidly constricting. Given China's big population, you immediately see why feeding millions of people becomes a major problem not only in the country but elsewhere.

Brown warns that if China exceeds the carrying capacity of its ecosystem, it is likely to turn—if it isn't already—to the world grains market. This will have a major impact on the rest of the world, which is also relying on that market for survival. This is putting the issue in a simplified way.

Brown's explanations will, for sure, be better grasped by professionals and students of economics, agriculture and ecology, three disciplines that now must try to influence the minds and actions of our national leaders and the rest of us.

Prickly sub-issues

A question that arises is how Brown's recommendations in Plan B will play with some sectors of our society, like the Church in the matter of overpopulation, and environmentalists in the issue of crop production. The first sector will naturally object to family planning methods that do not conform with its teachings, while the second group is likely to object to agricultural technologies that would speed up crop production through the controversial genetic intervention.

Brown, of course, does not touch on these sub-issues. If we do so here, it's mainly because they pluck sensitive chords in many hearts in this country.

Brown has much that we should hearken to. What will it take to convince our national leaders of the gravity of the situation? Another avalanche of logs? Another big flood? Scarcity of seafood or agricultural produce? We pray not.

It is often said this country is rich in biodiversity so it is hoped we will not face the same food problems as other countries do, at least not as severely. As for rising changing temperatures, solutions to some of the immediate causes of this phenomenon—like ozone depletion and toxic emissions due to the burning of fossil fuel—must be undertaken even more intensely.

There is, of course, another recourse for many Filipinos that goes well with the spirit of the season—to seek the spiritual grace to use our God-given creativity to see us through. It's worked for us in other matters before. It could again. Let's hope for that this coming year.

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com

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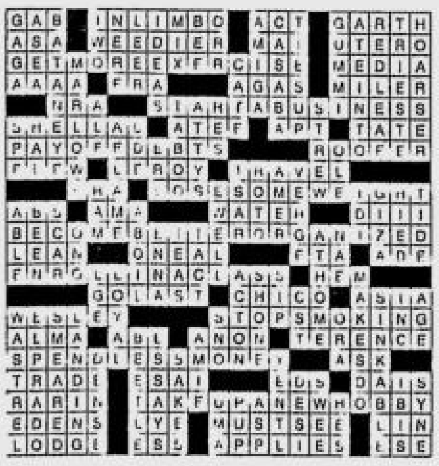

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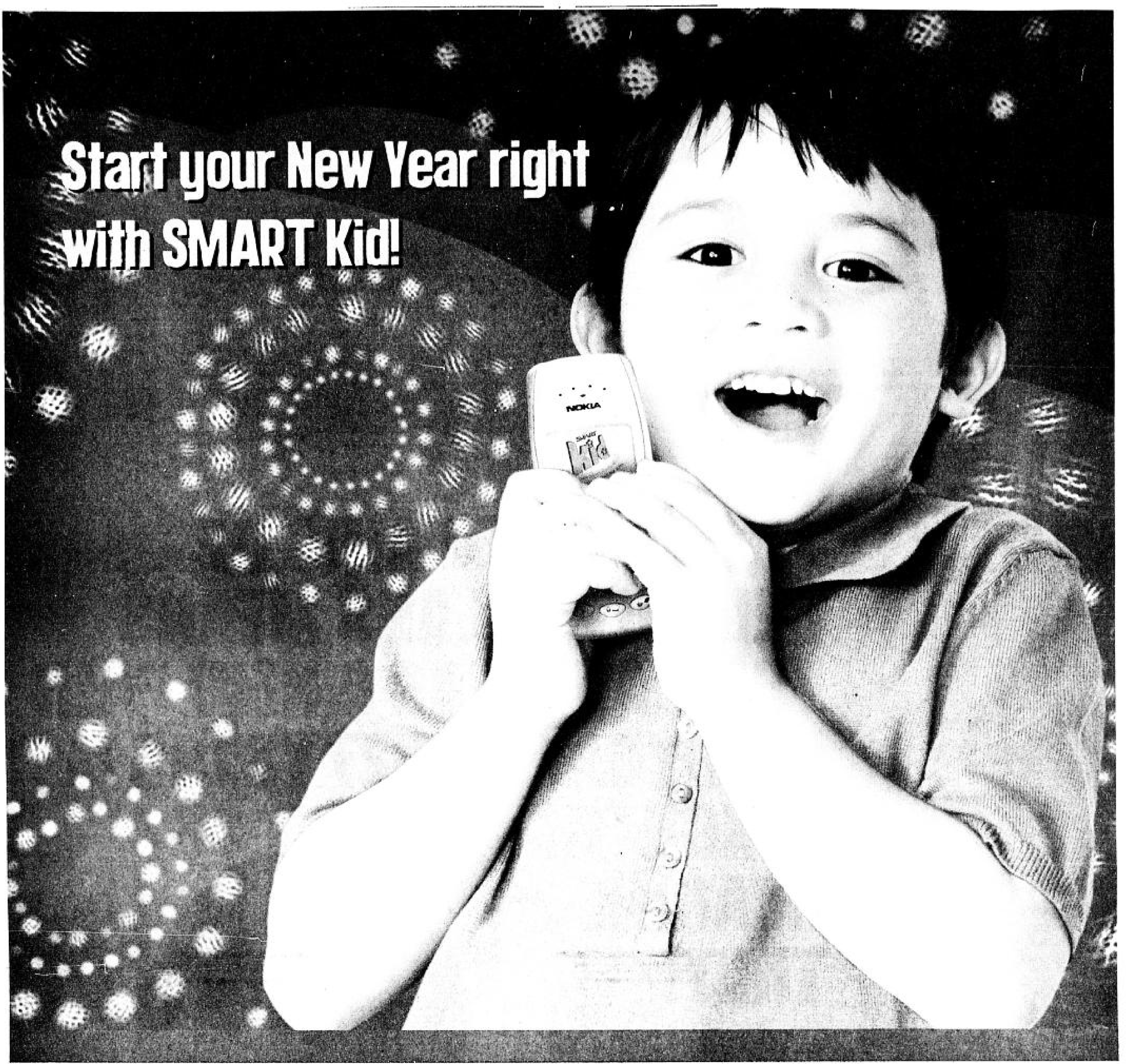

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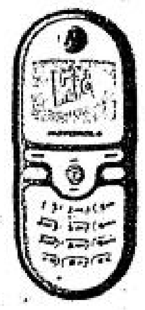
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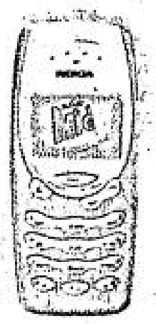
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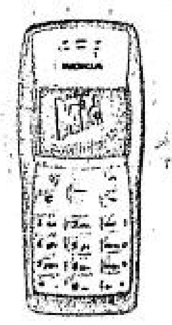
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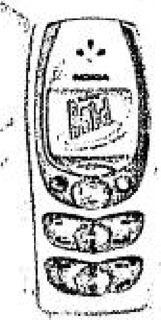
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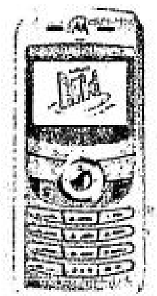
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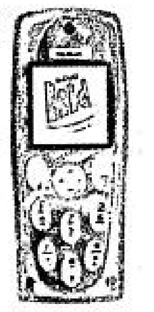
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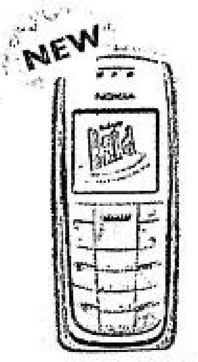
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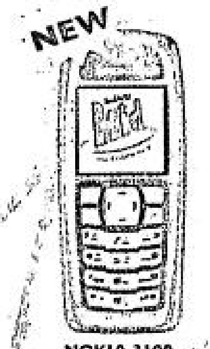
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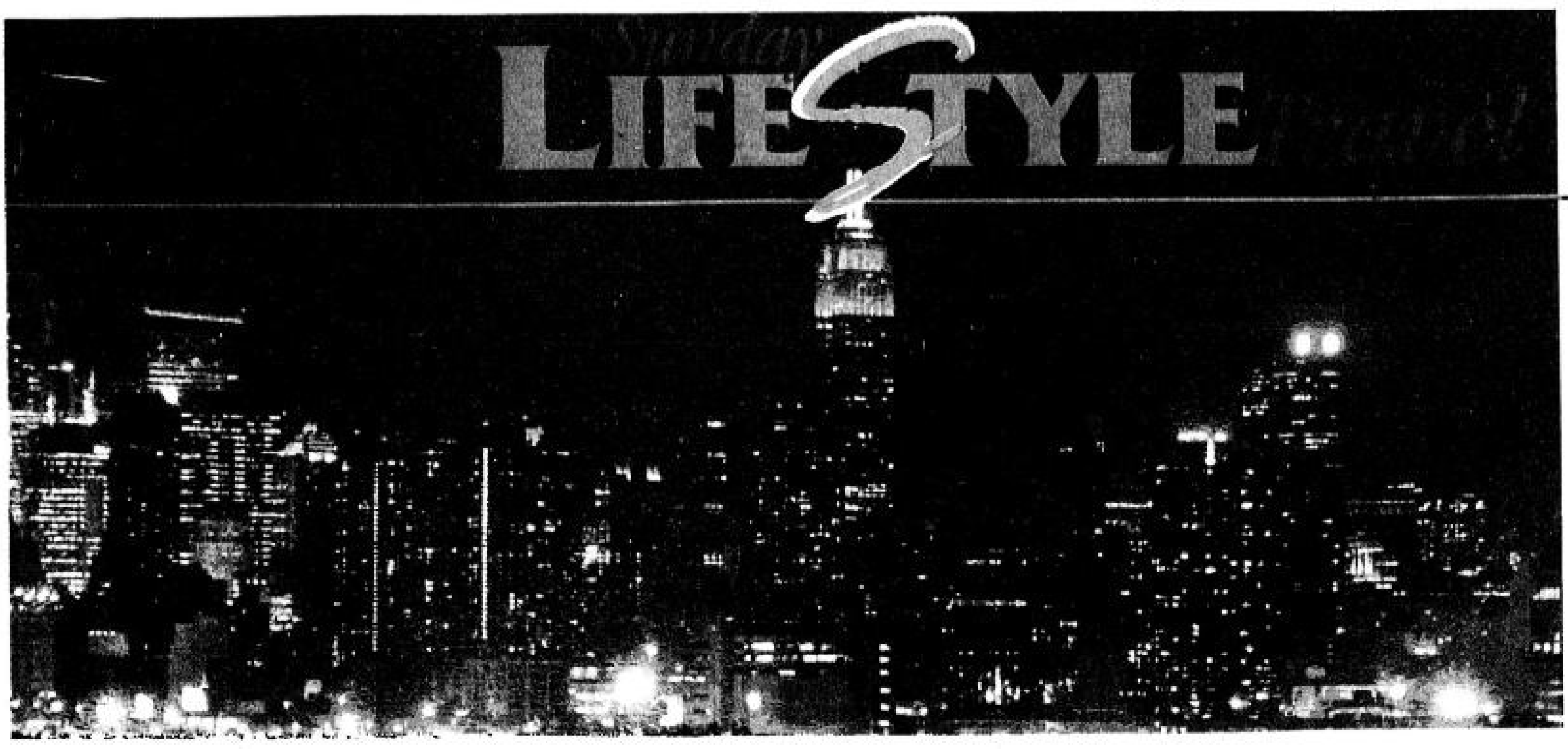

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The Philippines became the first Asian nation to have its colors flashing over the Empire State Building

THE FILIPINO community illuminated the Empire State Building tower in New York City on June 23, 2004. This view of the skyline taken from Weehawken, New Jersey
PHOTO: MICHAEL DEHAVEN

Nation's colors light Manhattan

By Carissa Villacorta
Contributor

IF there is one thing I'll remember fondly, and proudly, from 2004, it is that for the first time in history, the Empire State Building in New York lit in the colors of the Philippine flag on June 23 and 24. And we made it happen.

Spearheaded by Collaborative Opportunities for Raising Empowerment Inc. (Core), a New York City-based, non-profit organization of young Filipino professionals formed in 2002, the lighting celebrated the contributions and accomplishments of the Filipino community.

Although June 12, Philippine Independence Day, had already been reserved, Core made it possible to continue the community's festivities throughout the month.

Virgil Esguerra, the Core volunteer who suggested the stunt, said the lighting was meant to show Filipinos around the world that the Filipino community in the US was proud of their heritage. It was also meant to show the intensity of their bond to the homeland despite the distance, he added.

A special lighting ceremony was held on June 23 at the Philippine Center on Fifth Avenue. Leaders and prominent members of the Filipino community, including the officials of the Philippine Consulate General in New York, led by then Foreign Secretary Domingo Albert and Consul Cecilia Rebong, participated in the groundbreaking.

First

Lydia Ruth, director of public relations and special events coordinator for the Empire State Building, was excited about the lighting ceremony, "Filipinos, through Core, were the first Asian nationality to request the lighting in honor of their country."

Also present was NYC deputy commissioner for international business Linda Gras, who recognized the Filipino community's contributions to the city and conveyed the Mayor's support for its endeavors.

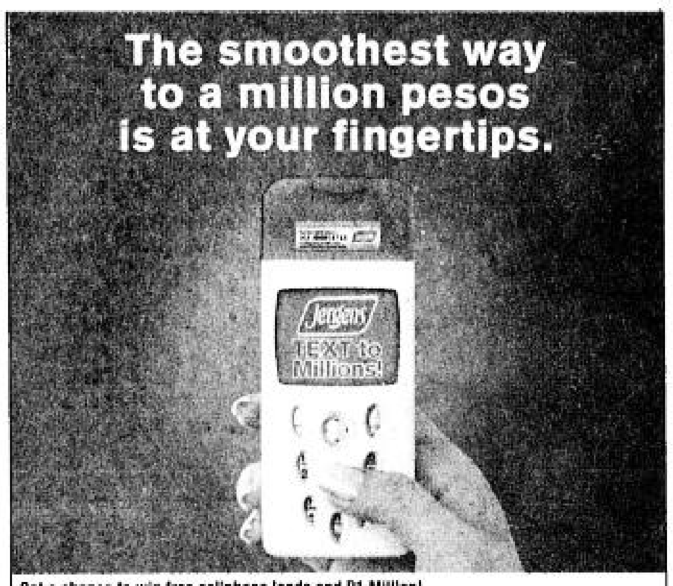
According to the 2000 US census, there are 2.3 million Americans of Filipino heritage in the US, nearly 200,000 of whom reside in the New York Tri-State area, an increase of 55 percent since 1990. This incredible growth makes the Filipino community the second largest Asian-American group in the US.

Blue, red and yellow were chosen to represent the various components of the Philippine flag. Yellow, as the top light, symbolized the eight rays of the sun, representing the first eight Philippine provinces that revolted against Spanish rule. The middle light corresponded to the top blue field on the Philippine flag representing peace, truth and justice, and the bottom light stood for the red field signifying patriotism and valor.

The Empire State Building was first lit in 1932 by a searchlight beacon seen for 50 miles that announced the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president. In 1976, colored lighting was introduced when the Empire State Building's tower was lit in red, white and blue (the most frequent color of the lights to this day) in celebration of the American Bicentennial. The tower lighting, a sight that can be seen for 80 miles on a clear night, begins at sunset and ends at midnight. A maximum of three colors can be projected.

Core Inc. is a volunteer organization composed of young Filipino professionals in the New York Tri-State area. To find out more about Core, visit www.core-nyc.org.

E-mail the author at cvillacorta@gmail.com



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See posters for details Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2105 Series of 2004

Thai Airways transports relief team to Phuket and Krabi

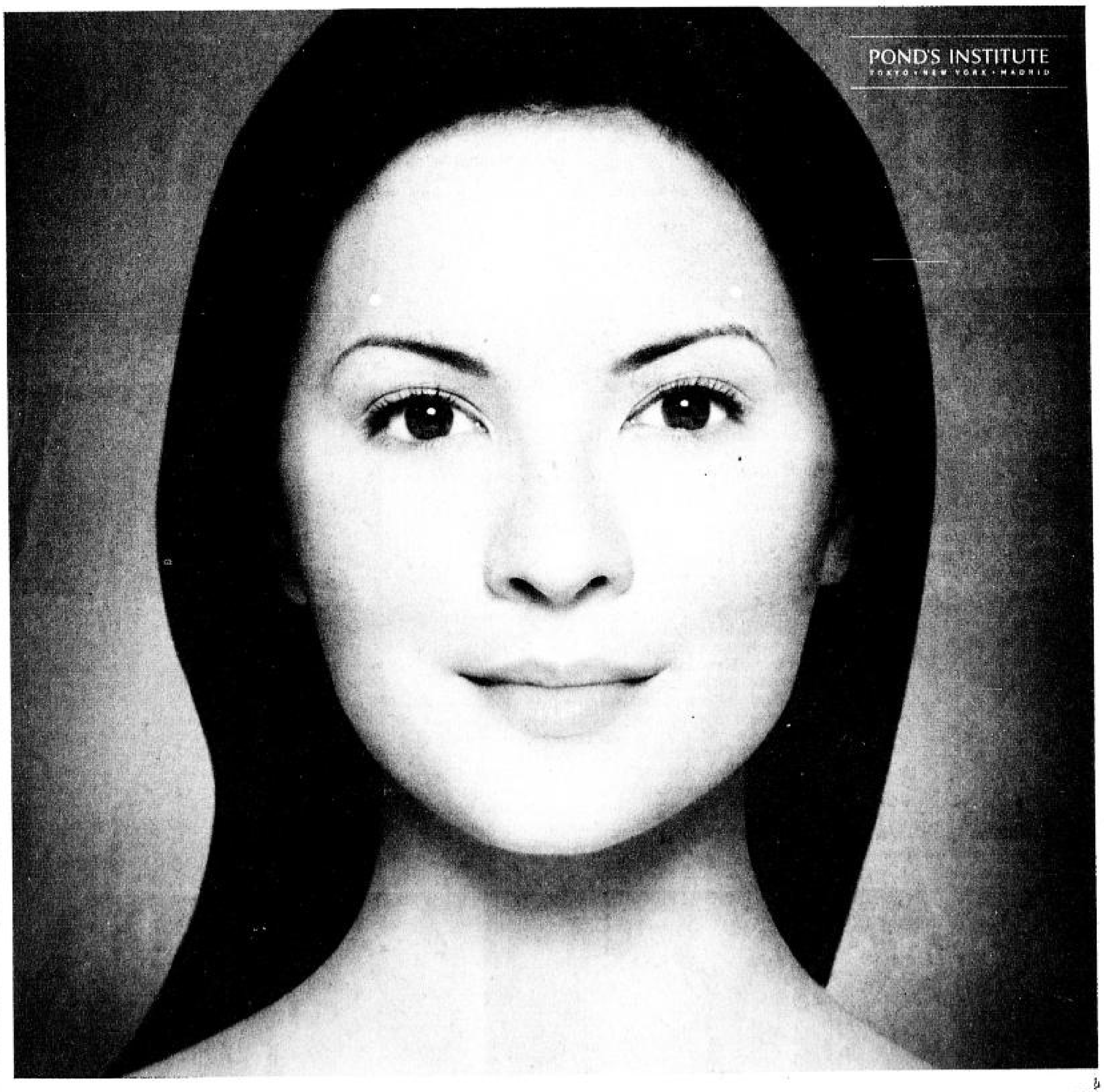
THAI Airways Int'l. Public Co. Ltd. has arranged special flights from Bangkok to Phuket and Krabi to transport the affected passengers and those injured by the recent tidal wave disaster that hit Southern Thailand.

Kanok Abhiradee, Thai's president, said the airline has provided natural disaster support by transporting to Phuket members of the relief team—doctors and nurses from the Police General Hospital—including medical equipment needed in the disaster relief efforts.

Furthermore, Thai flew members of the airline's FAST (Family Assistance and Support Team) who are trained for emergencies and humanitarian assistance and who can speak multiple languages, to assist passengers either waiting for their flights at Phuket International Airport or on standby for news at the Thai office in Phuket. Thai and Thailand's CMOC (Crisis Management Operations Center) have arranged relief centers at the Head Office to receive donations such as consumer products and first aid kits. Thai employees at Head Office have also been encouraged to donate blood to the Red Cross.

Thai has established Help Desk Centers at the following sites: Domestic Terminal of Bangkok International Airport (662-5357670 to 73), Krabi Airport (075-691940), Phuket International Airport (076-205335; 327194), Thai Airways Town Office-Phuket (076-212400; 076-211195).

In Manila, inquiries may be e-mailed to Thai's Sales Office at sales@thaiairways.com.ph. For reservation inquiries, please call (632) 812-4744 or e-mail resa@thaiairways.com.ph.



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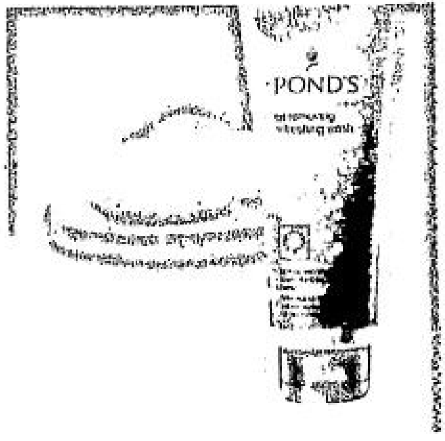


MODEL couple Valerie de los Santos and Robby Mananquil

STYLISH couple Archie Rodriguez and Bea Valdes

NEW parents Mandy and Duane Santos

LONGTIME lovers Joey Santos and Dr. Vicky Belo

AFFECTIONATE couple Philip and Ching Cruz

ENTERPRISING couple Tina and Ricco Ocampo

Pregnant and 'un-giving' this Yuletide

LIVELY set Kim and Fely Atienza

FAMILY friends Monina and Pikie Lopez

COOL mom Fe Rodriguez with hip son Junie

TEXTMATE Lucille Locsin with hubby Nick

DECEMBER celebrators Maurice Arcache, Sigalit Djemal and Anton San Diego

SOUND experts Donnie Tantoco and Bose's Wilson So

ASSUMPTION Batch '81 Christmas Party

A MAJOR setback about being born in December is that your presents mostly come with a card saying, "Happy Birthday and Merry Christmas!" Everybody else gets two gifts a year, but how many of even your closest few friends would buy separate gifts for you December babies?

Worse still is the phenomenon of recycling gifts from under the Christmas tree. "Hmm. I don't really need another candle. Maybe my best friend will like this."

Enterprising retailer **Ricco Ocampo**, whom I have known since the '80s from the days he started designing and mass-producing neon-graphic printed T-shirts, is a Sagittarius born on the same day as Philippine Tatler editor **Anton San Diego**, though I am not about to divulge what years they were born. The day before their natal day, Dec. 13, is the birthday of my yoga cousin slash climbing buddy **Jon-jon Rufino** and before that date, fun concert queen **Pops Fernandez**.

To my recollection, I still owe all of them a birthday gift, but I say that my pregnancy has given me a nine-month reprieve on gift-giving—a majorly delayed shopping period, wouldn't you agree? In fact, pregnancy has been my same excuse for the negligence of my Christmas list. I had planned to start early, but sleeping all day doesn't leave much, time in the day for shopping or wrapping.

At the intimate party-in-Ricco's place, his stylish, model-perfect wife, Tina, lavishly decorated their hip lanai area and made it into an expansive, garden blossom buffet table with guests lounging in their lush lawn. With delicious food like Kobe burgers and Unagi rolls from Kai Restaurant, it was a feast both for the stomach as well as the eye.

I was one of the midnight-shift guests, arriving as most of the earlier well-wishers had gone home already. I had my own small Christmas get-together that same night at my place for my Assumption batchmates to celebrate a successful year of raising funds.

At my party, we played a memory-style, make-a-wish game and one of my classmates wished for the speedy recovery of FPJ, along with the other wishes of good health, wealth and world peace. Hours later when I was at Party No. 2, **Angeli Valenciano** announced that FPJ had just passed away so she led a solemn prayer for a man she truly respected and honored. Pure-hearted **Gary V** sang "Our Father" right after and left us all in tears. Well, that's one party of Ricco I will forever remember.

Maurice and Anton's day

A joint birthday party hosted for **Maurice Arcache** and Anton was held days later in Je Suis Gourmand Restaurant at Net One Center in the Fort given by super Bench duo **Ben Chan** and **Miguel Pastor**. After the sumptuous dinner, Anton's party had to have singing and all the guests had to join in even with mediocre voices. It's a good thing that present in the house that evening was **Cris Villonco**, who had just flown in for the holidays. Her pop/operatic notes left us all in awe. We were serenaded the whole evening with various duet songs and only brave **Pepper Teehankee** sang after the talented diva.

One of the small dinner parties in my house was for the relatives of executive hunk-slash-serial dater **Jacques Dupasquier**. His extended family has flown in for the holidays, where they will spend a majority of their visit in sunny Boracay Island. Jacques, who has lately focused his attentions on his model sweetheart **Rachel Soriano**, had the PMAP models headed by stunner **Rissa Samson** do some caroling to raise funds for their yearly outreach program. The models kick off their heels for a day to be Big Brothers and Sisters to less fortunate kids with an afternoon of games, activities and gift packs, even granting some wishes.

Although the PMAP group emphasized that they were "models, not singers," their melodious voices were better than expected. All in all, they did well and were wonderful to watch with their near-perfect figures and my wish list height to boot. INQUIRER Super featured one of the model singers, **Phoemela Baranda**, with less clothes than she wore that evening, so my male guests (actually all relatives) were happy to do a photo-op with her. Way to go, Phoem!

Tech hunting

This Christmas, I was shopping around for possible gifts for my husband since I have been so demanding these past few months, though I think I am always demanding anyway. At the concluded plasma TV exhibit of Automatic Center in the Alabang Town Center Mall, I was exposed to all the models and brands of the latest in the TV technology world. If the sky were truly the limit, on the short list would have been the unit that was worth more than a million pesos. Funny but that TV was being displayed at the same time as the BMW One Series car that had almost the same price. Sorry, though, to my honey, but last year the sky was truly not the limit!

After checking out all the styles and seeing that Dennis would be happy with our existing Samsung unit, I ended up in the Bose Lifestyle booth getting a good deal on a sound system—those speakers for the iPod that are just too cool. Well, he's just lucky that I got him more than just a Christmas card!

With the high price of everything nowadays, there is nothing like tender loving care that I am sure my family will appreciate. The tragic death of the daughter of good family friends **Joe** and **Gina de Venecia** reminds us all that nothing material is worth more than life itself, so we should all learn to be grateful for every single day. My heartfelt condolences to the de Venecia family.

As listed in the December issue of Cosmopolitan magazine, two things to leave behind before the start of 2005: negativity and forgetting the good stuff. Great issue! Congratulations to **Lisa Gokongwei Cheng** and the Summit Media staff!

And with all that, 2004 has ended and 2005 has begun! I've had a beautiful time writing this column and bringing a bit of positive Sunday into all my readers' lives. Seeing everything in a more positive light and feeling grateful for even the minuscule things can transform your world. Happy New Year to one and all!

E-mail me at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph. You can also visit our family holiday website at www.sea-princess.com.

TESSA!

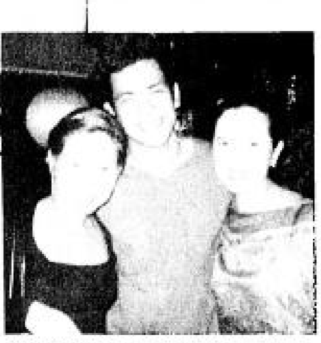
Tessa Prieto-Valdes

HEIGHT does matter when singing with the PMAP models

SAMSUNG girls with Automatic Center president Sammy Lim and an eager buyer

SINGING for charity. Jeff Misolas, voice coach Mike Mendoza, Michael Seifert and Angel Agustin

Pregnancy has given me a nine-month reprieve on gift-giving


MISSY Ayala and Mia Borromeo, both fans of Gary V.

STUNNING beauties Rachel Soriano, Phoemela Baranda and Rissa Samson

CLOSE friends Tina Tinio, Marco Antonio and DJ Montano

TV big bosses Hideyuki Takato, Toshinori Yokokawa and Kazue Salud of JVC and Angelo Valenton of Philips

FRIENDS for decades Ces Drilon, Rikki and Beng Dee

CHRISTMAS guests Marixi Prieto, Remedios Aguirre Dupasquier and Carla Morrongiello

HAPPY guests Alex Prieto, Dennis Valdes and Charlie Rufino with model Phoem holding Inquirer Super copy

A GARDEN buffet designed by Tina O.

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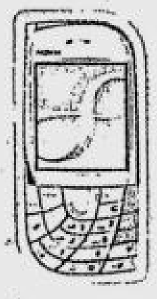
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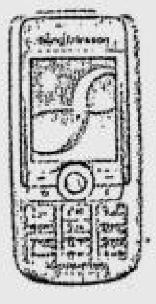
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Milestones

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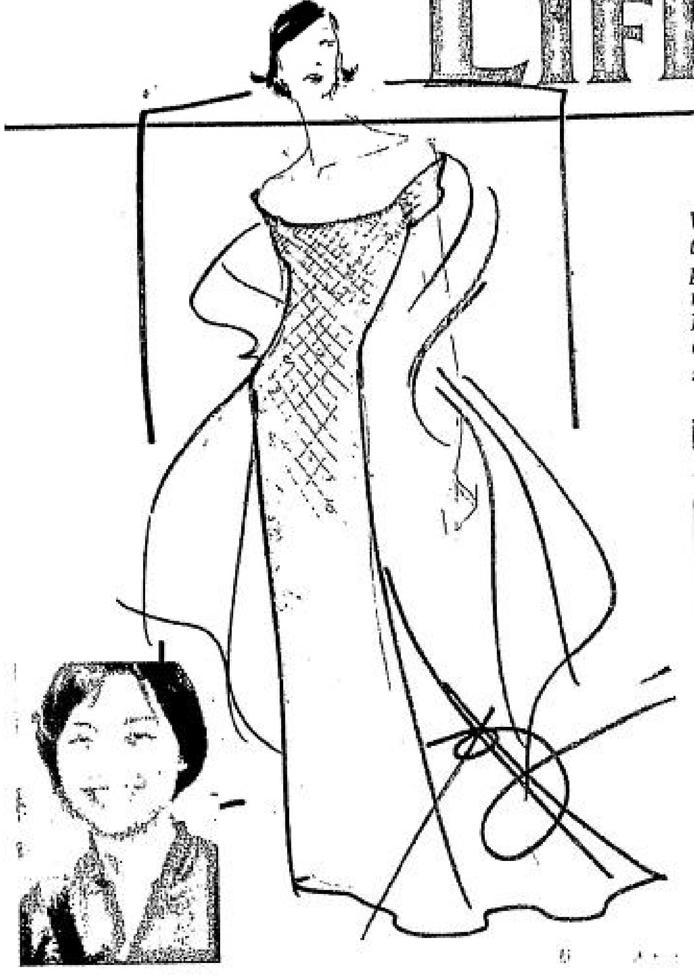
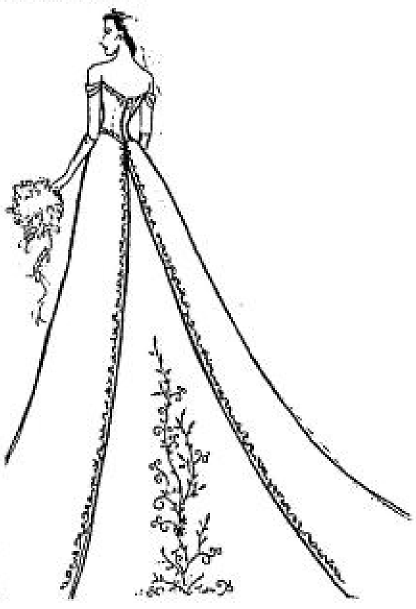


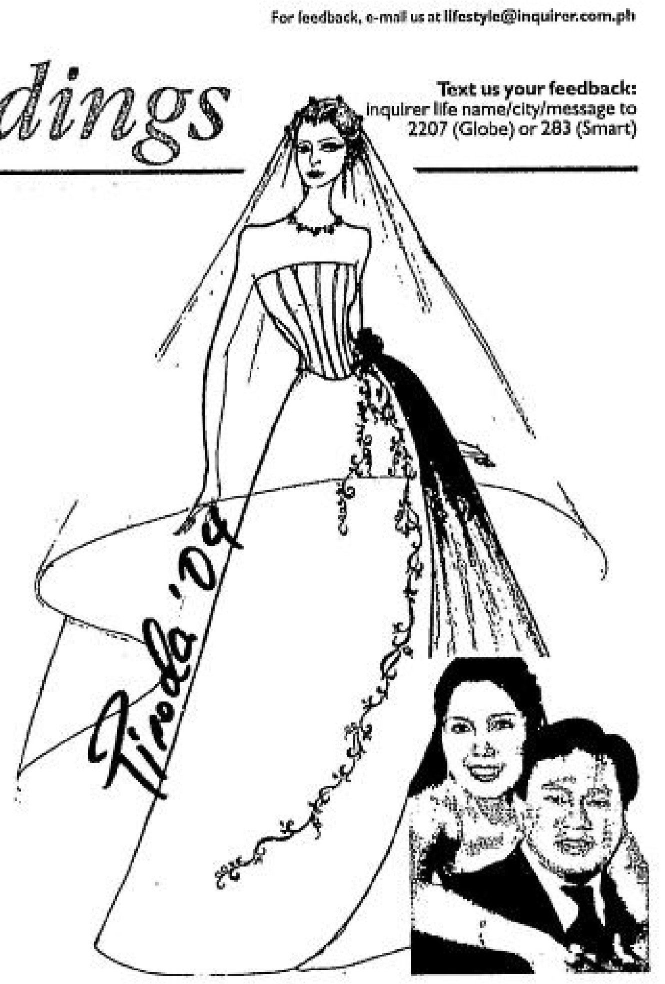
ILAGAN DEBUT

Ma. Angelica Aimee "Atchoo" E. Ilagan celebrated her 18th birthday recently at the Grand Ballroom of the Palm Country Club in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Atchoo, a sophomore student at De La Salle University, is the daughter of **Manuel** and **Angie Ilagan.** She wore a bright, canary-yellow silk tulle gown by **Rajo Laurel.** The gown is fully beaded with three-dimensional details and encrusted with Swarovski crystals and Austrian glass beads. It features an off-shoulder neckline and fishtail train. Completing the ensemble is a silk organza stole in marigold.



LABAD-QUIRONG

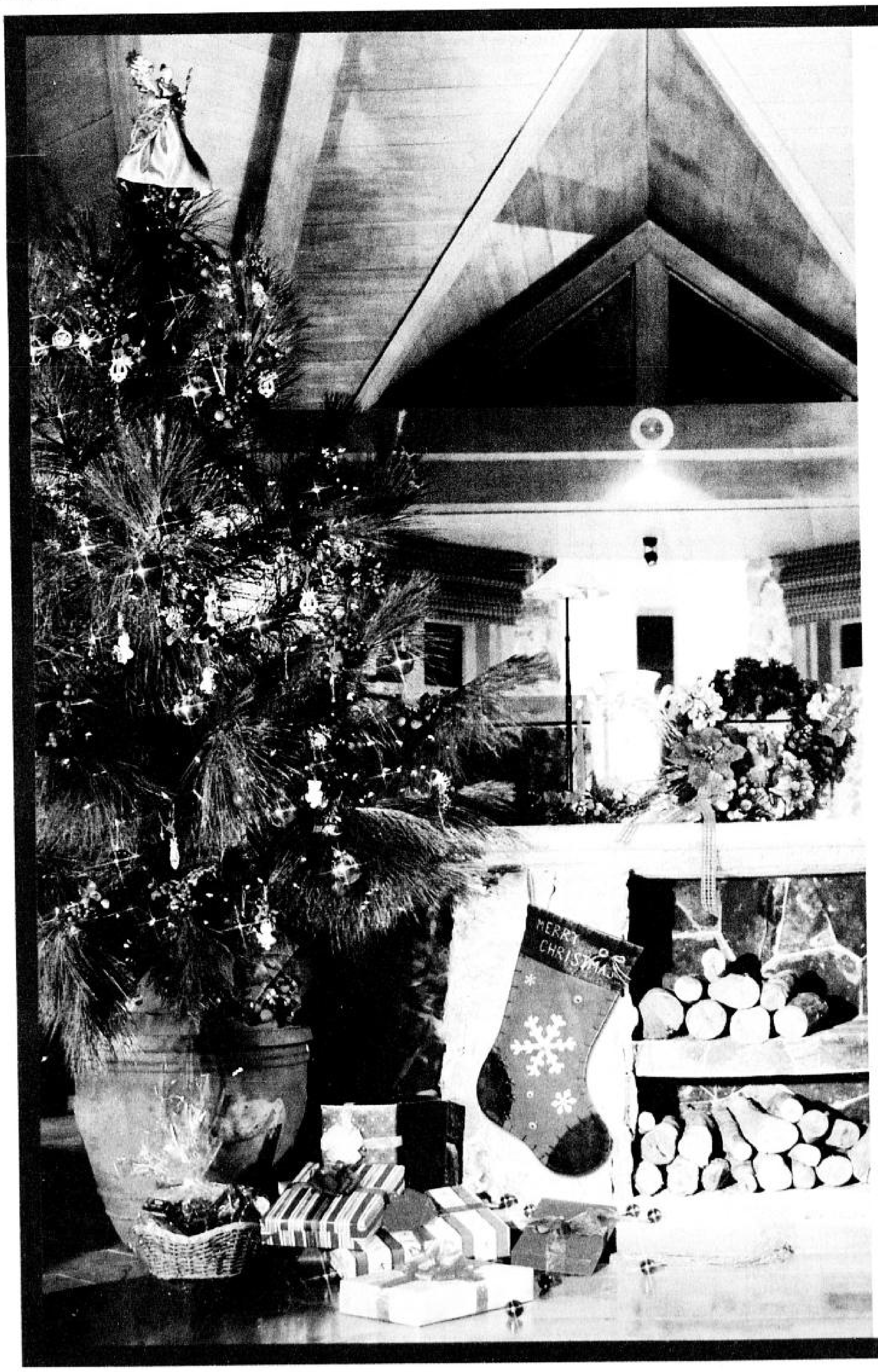
Collins G. Quirong, eldest daughter of **Emelita G. vda. de Quirong,** will exchange marriage vows with **Joseph Andrew S. A. Labad,** eldest son of **Regina S. A.vda. de Labad,** on Jan. 8 at an ecumenical Mass at the Makati Park and Garden. The bride will wear a tube gown in ivory duchess, draped at the shoulders by pearl-lined illusion tulle. The bodice is adorned with Swarovski crystals and cutbeads while the cathedral back is arched with handbeads. The wedding gown is designed by **Ogie Bamba** of Rosie's Gowns. Hair and makeup of the bride will be done by **William** of People's Salon.



TANO SILVER WEDDING

George and **Marlene Tano** recently celebrated their 25th anniversary by renewing their marriage vows at the Grand Ballroom of the Hotel InterContinental Manila.

The bride wore an ivory gown in silk designed by **Eric Pineda.** The strapless corset was embellished with Tiffany blue pailletes, caviar beads and Swarovski crystals in a vine and leaf design. The same pattern was repeated on the skirt with a burst of electric-pleated silk organza in monochromatic blue. French bows, handmade from horsehair and adorned with antique crystal brooches, completed the ensemble.



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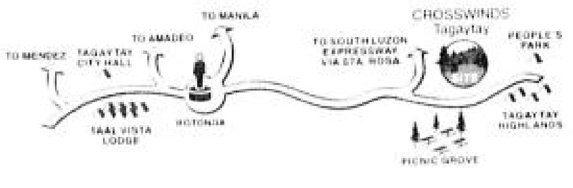

CROSSWINDS
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Miraculous Medal shrine marks 25th year

THE NATIONAL Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Posadas Village, Sucat, Parañaque City, will celebrate its 25th anniversary as a shrine this year beginning this month. As a special favor to pilgrims who will visit the shrine from Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 2005, plenary indulgences will be granted under the usual conditions of sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion and saying devout prayers for the intentions of the Pope. Pilgrims should also pray one Our Father and the Apostles Creed.

The year 2005 also marks the 175th anniversary of the apparition of the Blessed Virgin to St. Catherine Laboure. In giving the special privilege plenary indulgence, there is also a stipulation that if the pilgrim's disposition is any less than perfect, the indulgence will be partial only. Parañaque Bishop Jesse Mercado approved the granting of indulgences.

Graces through Mary

When the Blessed Virgin appeared to Catherine Laboure, she encouraged her to "come to the foot of this altar; here graces will be bestowed." According to the shrine's rector, Fr. Bernie Diaz, the whole-year celebration will focus on the theme "25 years of graces through Mary, hope of humanity."

Graces indeed have been poured out to devotees who have come to the foot of the altar in the national shrine to ask for Mary's help. Testimonies of miracles will be featured in a future column.

Preparations of activities are being made by the Parish Pastoral Council (this year's *hermanos* and *hermanas*) headed by Ferdinand Alagao and Carina Corona, chair of the worship ministry.

Restoration of altar

The shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal is run by the Vincentian Fathers who come under the order Congregation of the Missions. In 1978, under the leadership of Fr. Teodoro Barquin, CM, and through the kindness of Estela Marfori Posadas, the land was given for the building of the church and convent.

The groundbreaking was done on July 19, 1979 by Jaime Cardinal Sin with Eduardo Santiago as contractor using the design of the late architect Jose Maria Zaragoza.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

On Sept. 7, 1980, before 3,500 devotees, 30 priests and three bishops, Cardinal Sin declared the Parish of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal as a national shrine.

Architect Ramon Zaragoza, son of Zaragoza, will restore the altar of the Virgin beginning, hopefully, this month.

Restoration intends to stick close to the vision of his father to make the shrine a fusion of architectural formalism with theology. The roof, when built, was likened to a dome featuring spirals that gathered in a vortex akin to what nature has equipped the nautilus. From this convergence rose the pylon, some 100 meters high, all in concrete capped by a steel cross in the exterior.

Ramon Zaragoza will use granite to restore the walls of the altar. Whenever I drop by the shrine, I always feel drawn to kneel in front of the altar before the Virgin and pour my heart out there.

Parokya ng Ina ng mga Dukha

The Parokya ng Ina ng mga Dukha (FB Tenement, Western Bicutan, Taguig, tel. 8242447), according to Fr. Joselito Jopson, parish priest, will hold a novena prior to the feast of the Virgin of the Poor. The feast will commemorate the first apparition of the Virgin in Belgium in 1933.

Mr. and Ms Ludovic Raemakers, who own a restaurant in Antwerp, Belgium, had donated the two statues of the Virgin to the Taguig parish. They personally delivered the first in March, 1999 and sent the second by air in June, 1999. The couple was introduced by Mona Lisa Lacanlale to Fr. Nicandro Blanquisco, parish priest then.

Prayers in Tagalog were translated by Msgr. Jose Abriol; in Cebuano by Fr. Isidro Marinay. The audiocassette tape of songs, "Maria, Virgin of the Poor," and my book "The Virgin of the Poor: A Tribute from her Filipino Children," are available at leading bookstores. How else can we promote this devotion? Please pray for this intention.

Center for Migrant Youth

Twenty-two years ago, Fr. Ben Villote took a significant turn in his ministry when he left the comforts of his parish and, instead, put up the Center for Migrant Youth (CMY).

The center took into its fold stowaways from the provinces, wandering Manila's streets dirty, hungry and hopeless. Young men aged 15-20 walked into the center to have a meal, take a bath and, perhaps, for the first time feel loved.

CMY's address in 103 Cordillera St., QC, has become a home for the hopeless who find there a haven of hope. Five generations of youth have become professionals—as seafarers, overseas workers, educators, drivers, computer technicians, and even small entrepreneurs and entertainers. All these became possible when one priest went out his way to help.

How the CMY survived is a work of God, inspiring others also to help. Every year, Father Ben keeps in touch with this column which he says he reads regularly. And I am happy to learn about the good news happening to his wards.

Doctors are staying

On the cover of the December issue of Health and Lifestyle magazine are doctors of medicine with Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit. They are Norbert Lingling Uy, Rosendo Roque, Bu Castro and Educardo Gatchalian who are presidents of their medical organizations.

They are doctors who are committed to stay in the country and work here. And they say in the article that there is hope for the country, even with fresh graduates in medicine going abroad to seek greener pastures.

This is heartening, good news for the New Year. Dr. Rafael Castillo, who is my cardiologist and the medical columnist of INQUIRER on Saturdays, is the magazine's editor in chief and one of the publishers. When he ventured into publishing a health magazine with other colleagues, Dr. Castillo meant business.

This was not going to be a fly-by-night magazine. In its pages, one can find interesting articles on how to maintain one's health. It is possible to be healthy, it says, if you follow rules of health care. The magazine turned three before Christmas and the guests who came believed that H & L magazine is here to stay.

St. Joseph statue needed

The Blessed Sacrament Parish in Tacloban City needs a statue of St. Joseph. Edgar Lozano who lives and works in Macabebe, Pampanga, went to Colgante Apalit and asked Loy Aguirre Religious Arts to make one. The statue is finished, but it needs to be paid for. Please text Edgar at 0919-2167381 if you want to help. Thank you for your kindness.

Congratulations to Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo on his 40th anniversary as a priest. God bless you. May your tribe increase.

OUR Lady of the Miraculous Medal

NATIONAL Shrine of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Posadas Village. Design is by the late architect JoseMa. Zaragoza.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

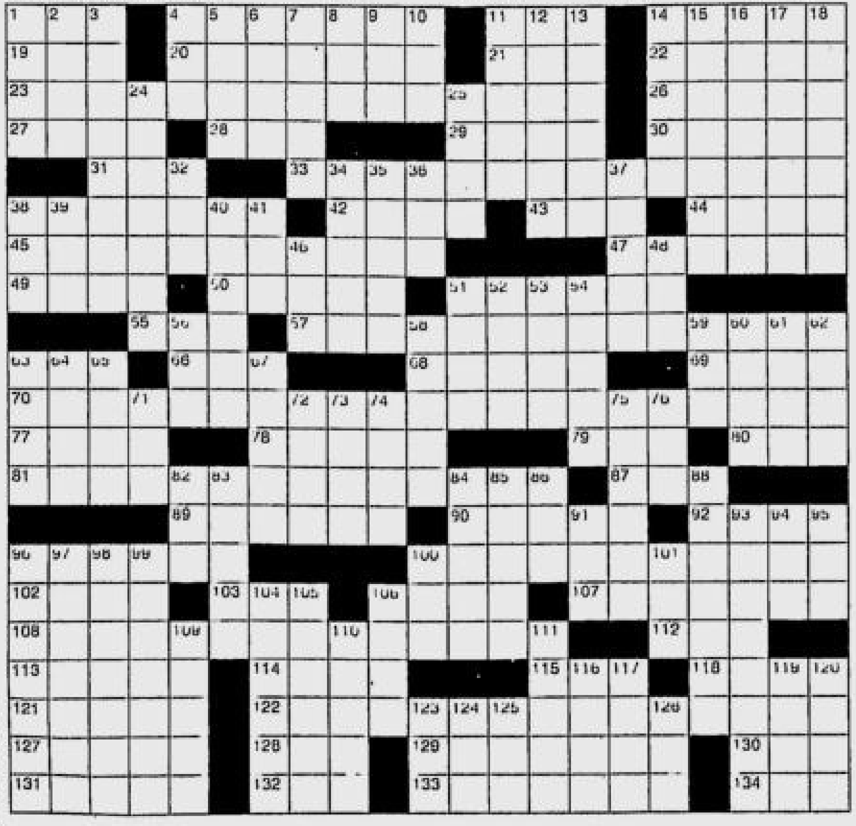
PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo THE NEW YEAR

ACROSS

1 Schmooze
4 Neither here nor there
11 Play a role
14 Singer Brooks
19 Light — feather
20 More like an unkempt garden
21 — tai (cocktail)
22 In — (before birth)
23 Resolution #1
26 TV, radio, etc.
27 Very narrow shoe width
28 Title for a monk
29 "Jumpin' Jack Flash, it's —!"
30 Running specialist
31 Gun gp.
33 Resolution #2
38 Varnish ingredient
42 To — (exactly)
43 Liable
44 London art gallery
45 Resolution #3
47 Shingler, e.g.
49 Aviated
50 "Bad, bad" Brown
51 Go places
55 Time span
57 Resolution #4
63 Target of sit-ups
66 Docs' gp.
68 H2O
69 Caesar's 503
70 Resolution #5
77 Not fat
78 Shaq of hoops
79 Greek H
80 Juice bar drink
81 Resolution #6
87 Skirt edge
89 Start after everyone else
90 A Marx brother
92 Iraq locale
96 Founder of Methodism
100 Resolution #7
102 — mater
103 Bearded prez
106 Shortly
107 Actor Stamp
108 Resolution #8
112 Query
113 Part of WTO
114 Morales of "Bad Boys"
115 Koch and McMahon
118 Podium
121 — to go (gung-ho)
122 Resolution #9
127 Blissful places
128 Soap ingredient
129 Show you shouldn't miss
130 Architect Maya
131 Mountain inn
132 Tricky turn
133 Uses
134 Suffix with legal

DOWN

1 Lovesick
2 Mid-voyage
3 Wink
4 "Sands of — Jima" (WWII film)
5 Sponge ball brand
6 Ogle lewdly
7 Concepts
8 Blender setting
9 Nectar collector
10 Bruin Bobby
11 Compaq competitor
12 Melon variety
13 Binds
14 — Bears (chewy candy)
15 Eroded
16 Lettuce variety
17 Italian port
18 More husky-voiced
24 English playwright Christopher
25 Actress Blanchett
32 TV alien
34 Society no-no
35 ABA members
36 — gestae (deeds)
37 Scatter
38 Tanning lotion abbr.
39 Actor Linden
40 Burning
41 B-F linkup
46 Schubert's "The — King"
48 Corrida cheer
51 Romanov ruler
52 Old newspaper section
53 Res. of the U.S.
54 Threshold
56 Smash into
58 Epsom and —, England
59 Amin of Uganda
60 Great Sphinx locale
61 Hurried
62 Ocean motion
63 Competent
64 Has- —
65 Lasting impression
67 Simmering
71 Lennon's love
72 Sicilian summer resort
73 Oolong and pekoe
74 Diplomacy
75 Where charity begins, in an adage
76 Scot's denial
82 Bigger than med.
83 Faithful
84 Anne Bronte, a.k.a. — Bell
85 Glistened
86 Drink daintily
88 Manages somehow
91 Tex. clock setting
93 Like the "Titanic," in retrospect
94 Ltd. relative
95 Epoch
96 Resource squanderer
97 Madrid museum
98 Bedaubed
99 Takeoff's opposite
100 — -Cone (icy treat)
101 ". . . — mouse?"
104 Ladybug, e.g.
105 Bacon pieces
106 Gallic girlfriend
109 Dimwitted
110 "— alive!"
111 Streisand title role
116 He loved Lucy
117 —' Pea (Olive Oyl's kid)
119 Stork's cousin
120 "Auld Lang —"
123 Actress Thurman
124 Kennel baby
125 Viper variety
126 "For — a jolly good . . ."



answer on page D3

Bride-to-be loves her neighbor

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

DEAR Emily,

My boyfriend of nine years and I plan to get married sometime this year. We're both in our early 30s. He is abroad as an OFW (overseas Filipino worker).

Last year my neighbor and childhood friend suddenly became the focus of my attention. One day, he asked me for a date but I got sick before we could go out. For one straight month, he and I sent text messages to each other. And then he just stopped communicating with me.

He has also not asked me for another date. When I (sent him a text message) from another phone using another name, he wanted to know who I was. Our (exchange of text messages) went on for a while then, just as suddenly, he also just stopped answering my messages.

My boyfriend is coming back this year and I'm not sure if I want to marry him. I don't know if this neighbor actually likes me or not. I know deep in his heart he cares for me. I want to tell him how I feel about him but I am shy. Sometimes I see him looking at me like he wants to tell me something.

Should I make the first move? Why hasn't he asked me out again? I don't want to get married knowing that I also am in love with another. I am so confused!

BEYONCÉ

You would have had my sympathy if this neighbor was head over heels in love with you and was moving heaven and earth to win you. I'd be doing my eeny-meeny-meiny-mo myself, helping you choose between him and your boyfriend.

How can you know he cares for you deep in his heart? The only thing you're sure of is he knows your address and cell phone number.

You've been miserable for a year now. Isn't it obvious he is not interested in you? Can't your gut tell—if not your mind? If he were interested, you wouldn't even have to lift a finger. He would be climbing your wall to get to you.

You can never stop a man from pursuing a woman he is very interested in, never—your neighbor included! He will do everything and anything to get you, boyfriend or no boyfriend.

And you're funny ha-ha giving too much meaning to your neighbor's glances. He is looking at you because he probably wants to know why you are looking at him!

You are going crazy running after this neighbor because you cannot take rejection. You're lonely and this excitement is giving you life.

Take a hold of yourself. There's nothing more pathetic than begging for a man's attention and love when he doesn't feel a thing in return.

You may win his heart briefly —why not, coconut?—you are already there for the taking! But, sooner or later, he'd want to bolt and leave you.

The loser here is your boyfriend of nine years. Separations magnify and romanticize relationships. Pity your boyfriend who may be already making grandiose plans, not knowing that he is only second fiddle. Yet, you may just marry him when your mind finally accepts you have no chance with your neighbor.

Think hard about your future. Granting you get what you want, after the excitement of loving subsides, life will look you in the eye and ask, "... so you've had your fun... what next?" It's better than best for a man to love you more and not the other way around.

Truly-ly.

Brothers' love

I'm 30. I have a stable job, and I am gay. I've had a boyfriend for three years now and I am happy and in love with him.

Our relationship is purely platonic. We've never had sex although no one will believe that, but we are very intimate with each other. We were very happy with each other until his younger brother came into the picture. My boyfriend is 25 years old and his brother is 19.

His brother is always with us every time we go out, including Palawan where we went for a vacation. It was there that he (the brother) started flirting with me.

He was extra sweet to me and would wink every time I looked at him. He started sending me text messages full of sweet nothings. He would call in the middle of the night to sing me a love song and talk until the wee hours of the morning.

I tolerated his flirting until I realized I was falling for him.

It was when he invited me to go night swimming that we became lovers. I'm now so in love with him and we secretly go out every day.

His brother, my boyfriend, has no idea about this affair. I am so confused.

I love my boyfriend because he makes me feel I am very important in his life. I love his younger brother because he makes me feel like a woman. What should I do?

CRAZY GAY

My, my, aren't we being a little too greedy here? You're playing both fields and enjoying it no doubt, but for how long?

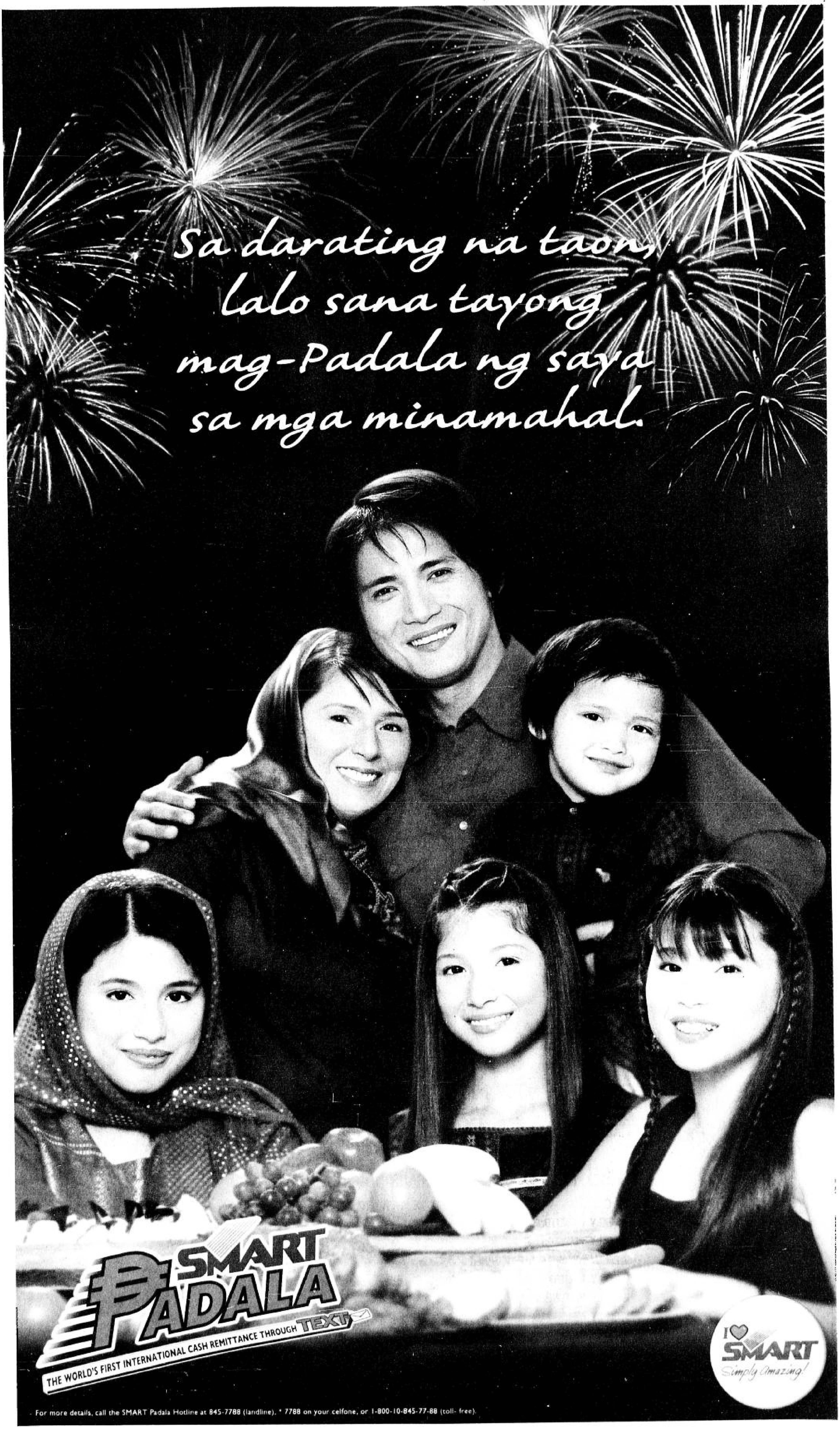
How long before the younger brother starts making demands knowing you've got a stable job and all that jazz? How long before the thrill of forbidden love is lost and becomes just another annoying and boring day at the office?

Respect is uplifting while excitement can be tiring and tiresome.

Can you afford to lose the older brother, a tried and tested companion, for someone who's young, untested and still has a lot of growing up to do? Tsk, tsk.

Enjoy the thrill while it lasts... and that won't be long. Then what?

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle; or send your letters to Inquirer. Listen to Ms Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, dwBR 104.3 FM.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2004 CHART-TOPPERS

Star Greetings

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Ara Mina	Ara Mina	100472
2	Troy Montero	Troy Montero	100480
3	Jealous	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina	100802
4	Aubrey Miles	Aubrey Miles	100473
5	Quality Time	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina	100804
6	Protective	Troy Montero & John Ferriols	100797
7	Marc Nelson	Marc Nelson	100477
8	Finished	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina	100800
9	Sharing	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina	100801
10	Patrick Garcia	Patrick Garcia	100478
11	Rivals	Troy Montero & John Ferriols	100796
12	Inviting	Aubrey Miles & Ara Mina	100803
13	Kris Aquino	Kris Aquino	100475
14	Double Time	Troy Montero & John Ferriols	100795
15	Judy Ann Santos	Judy Ann Santos	100474
16	01-Katya Santos	Katya Santos	100483
17	02-Katya Santos	Katya Santos	100487
18	Pops Fernandez	Pops Fernandez	100479
19	Lost A Bet	Bianca Araneta	100840
20	Habulan	Sound	101331

star greetings

International

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Because You Loved Me	Celine Dion	101472
2	Ain't It Funny	Jennifer Lopez	101532
3	Miracle	Celine Dion	101628
4	She Bangs	Ricky Martin	101516
5	Girls Just Wanna Have Fun	Cyndi Lauper	101481
6	No Such Thing	John Mayer	101502
7	My Heart Will Go On	Celine Dion	101476
8	The Power Of Love	Celine Dion	101479
9	Lost Without Each Other	Hanson	101636
10	Amazing	George Michael	101634
11	Let's Get Loud	Jennifer Lopez	101534
12	Word Up	Korn	101639
13	Truly Madly Deeply	Savage Garden	101518
14	Penny & Me	Hanson	101637
15	It's All Coming Back To Me Now	Celine Dion	101475
16	Heaven	Lost Lonely Boys	101641
17	To Love You More	Celine Dion	101480
18	Your Body Is A Wonderland	John Mayer	101504
19	Flawless	George Michael	101635
20	Sound Of Silence	Simon & Garfunkel	101522

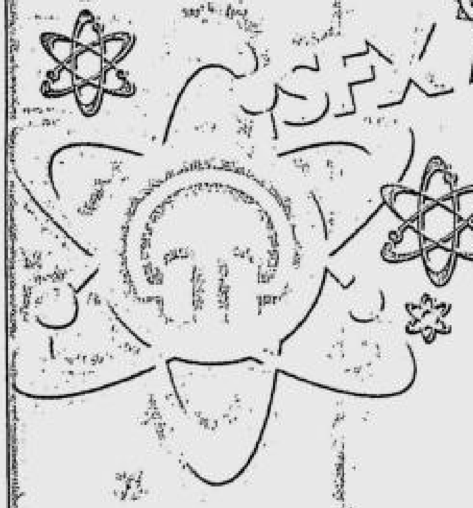
INTERNATIONAL

Sound Effects

RANK	RING NAME	RING ID
1	Cartoon - Laugh - Chipmunk	100057
2	Baby Crying 2	100442
3	Animal - Chimp - Excited Calls	100025
4	Baby Crying	100047
5	Animal - Cow Moo	100049
6	Child Funny Sneeze	100153
7	Female Hilarious Laughter	100104
8	Horror Stinger	100105
9	War	100112
10	Gun - Machine - M16 - Burst	100064
11	Animal - Dog Barking - 2	100050
12	Female Laughter With Snorting	100156
13	Big Kiss With Vocal	100048
14	Person Screaming With Fear	100459
15	Bubbles - Hot Tub Bubbling	100055

Comedy

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Manok	WolfPac	100009
2	Iba Ibang Tawa	Giselle Sanchez	100744
3	Bad Trip Pare	WolfPac	100286
4	Ang Kulit-kulit Mo	Allan K.	100645
5	Maghiwalay Na Tayo	WolfPac	100292
6	Ang Taray	Allan K.	100646
7	Huwag Mo Akong Tawagan 2	Gulpe De Gulat	101065
8	Words Of Wisdom	Giselle Sanchez	100745
9	Natakot Ka Ano?	Allan K.	100649
10	MMDA	WolfPac	100010
11	Akala Mo Sasagutin Kita	Spit	101270
12	Ingittero	WolfPac	100165
13	Asong Matalino	WolfPac	100163
14	Special Phone Operator	Jon Santos	100739
15	Syota Ko Pare	Allan K.	100651
16	Mike Manrique	Allan K.	100738
17	Bruha	Allan K.	100648
18	Hindi Ka Sasagutin Nyan	Giselle Sanchez	100743
19	Naaksidente	WolfPac	100293
20	Pakwan Nga	WolfPac	100168



OPM

RANK	RING NAME	ARTIST	RING ID
1	Before I Let You Go	Freestyle	100044
2	Bulaklak	Viva Hot Babes	100137
3	Rainbow Chorus	South Border	100611
4	Sasakyan Kita	Gladys And The Boxers	100223
5	Sa Iyo	Sarah Geronimo	100134
6	So Slow	Freestyle	100045
7	Say That You Love Me	Regine Velasquez	101681
8	Twin Hearts	Sarah Geronimo	100135
9	Rainbow	South Border	100610
10	Ikaw Nga	South Border	101450
11	How Could You Say You Love Me	Sarah Geronimo	101903
12	Bakit Ngayon Ka Lang	Pops Fernandez With Freestyle	101665
13	Forevermore	Regine Velasquez	101679
14	A Love To Share	Rivermaya	100126
15	Rainbow (Remix)	South Border	100612
16	Till I Found You	Freestyle	100141
17	Leech	Protein Shake	100358
18	Ako'y Maghihintay Duet	Mark Bautista & Sarah Geronimo	101232
19	Balisong	Rivermaya	100897
20	The Show	South Border	100614
21	Hotbabes	Viva Hot Babes	100138
22	Magpakailanman	Wency Cornejo	100238
23	Jumbo Day	Salbakuta	100234
24	Kailangan Kita	Orange & Lemons	100316
25	Kaya Pala	Pops Fernandez	100231

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E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
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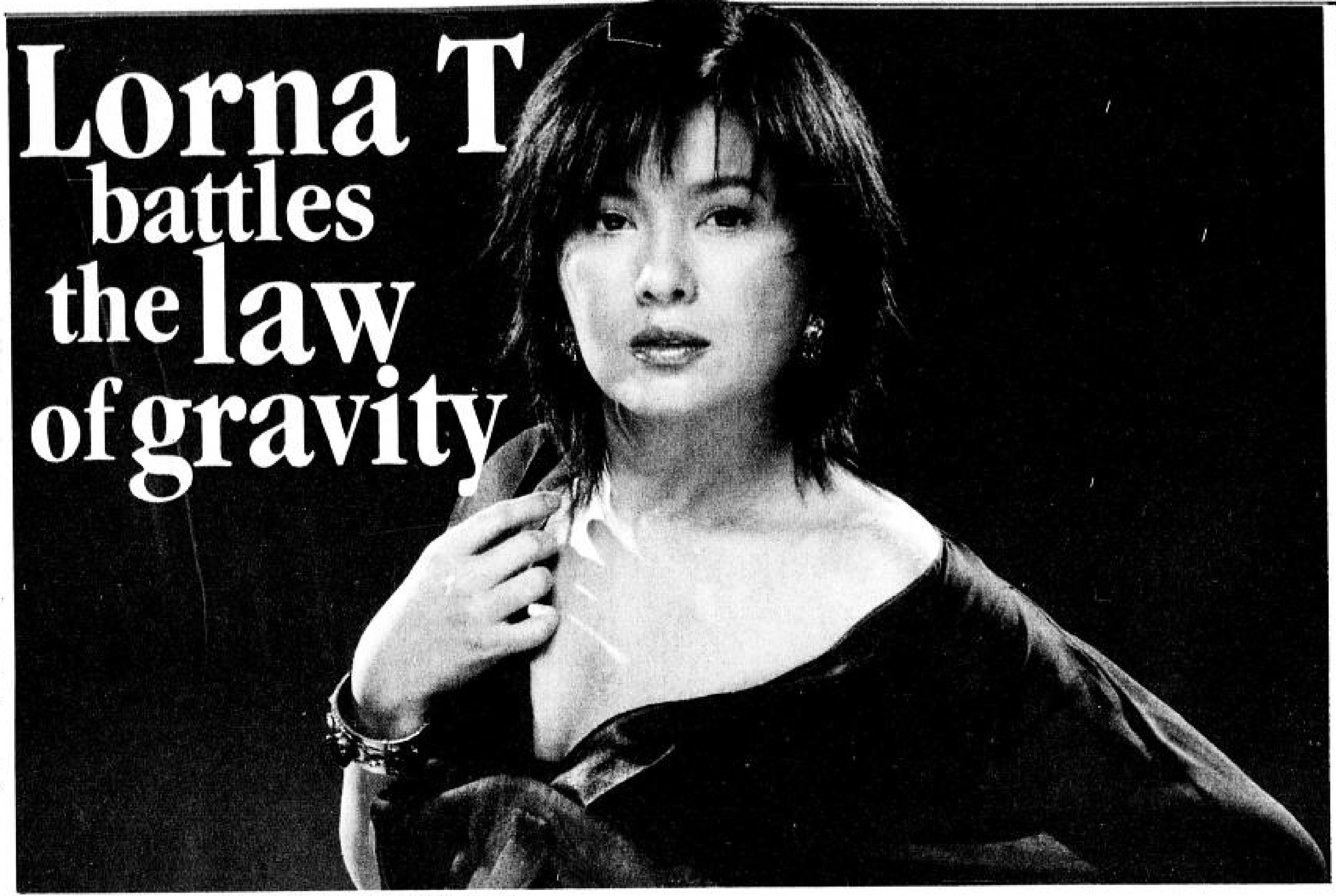
Lorna T battles the law of gravity



TOLENTINO. "You have to work on it, and it's not all that easy."

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Contributor

GAPE and gawk all you want. There's not a hint of aging on the famous face of Philippine movies' "Pictorial Queen."

And to think that the luminous Lorna Tolentino celebrated her 43rd birthday on December 23.

Lorna has a realistic and healthy attitude towards growing old gracefully. Meanwhile, she reveals the secret of her youthful glow: "It all boils down to how you take care of yourself. You have to work on it, and it's not all that easy. Everybody grows old; it's just a question of knowing how to delay showing the telltale signs—by defying the laws of gravity."

"LT" intends to fight gravity every step of the way. "How? By exercising. With proper diet," she says. "And, of course, with regular trips to Forever Flawless."

She is the latest celebrity pitch lady for the mall-based beauty and skin-care clinic.

As in all her endeavors, Lorna has made it a point to know every single detail of the beauty business, and of staying beautiful.

With authority

She speaks with the authority of a licensed dermatologist: "As you age, your pores open. When you are younger your pores are closed." In her line of work, she says, the skin "takes a lot of beating" from the heavy lights and just-as-heavy makeup." Meaning, actors like herself have to take more care.

For exercise—"to sweat it out"—she plays badminton two to three times a week. "Sweating allows the body to release dreaded toxins that cause aging, she says. "I also do the Cyclone [a professional fitness machine] at least once a week. My Cyclone machine was a gift; I set it up at home."

LT went on a vegetarian diet a few years back. Most recently, she tried the South Beach Diet for 21 days. But she also got a little help—a nip here, a tuck there—from friend and Flawless guru Dr. Vicki Belo.

"I had a liposuction last September," she says candidly. "I had work done on my legs and back because I'm bottom-heavy, like all the women in my family."

But not all the physical regimen in the world can make a woman truly beautiful, LT says: "As much as by her outer appearance, a woman's beauty is defined by her inner self. If you are super-stressed and always thinking of your problems, you will look awful."

Super-calm

As though to illustrate this, LT is super-calm about intrigues pitting her against former Flawless model Rosanna Roces, concerning the latter's so-called "closeness" to LT's husband, actor Rudy Fernandez.

"Why [should I]?" she said when asked if she minded. "My husband has his own set of friends, as I have mine. He happens to be close to Rosanna and her husband Tito Molina."

It's really a matter of assuming an attitude of thankfulness, LT says. "You should accept everything that comes your way, even the trials, in a positive manner. "Don't take problems to heart. Don't dwell on them. No matter what happens, I remain thankful. I thank the Lord for all the blessings and not ask for anything more."

Indeed, Lorna has been abundantly blessed— on both the professional and personal levels.

An award-winning actress, she recently reinvented herself as a TV host—with gigs on GMA-7's lifestyle gabfest, "All About You" and the reality second-chance show, "30 Days."

"It was something new for me and I had a great time hosting those shows," she recalls. "Now, I'm more at ease, more comfortable than before, as a host."

Top priority

So snug is the host's hat that she has consented to co-host the show biz talk show "Star Talk" (also on GMA-7) for the whole of January.

Not that she is turning her back on acting. "GMA-7 will soon launch a new soap opera," she reports. As for movie projects, she plans to take it easy. "When I do soaps and movies at the same time, as I did during the time of 'Mano Po 2,' I get sick."

An unforgettable boob-tube experience for her was joining the "Caregivers in Canada" episode of the reality top-rater "Extra Challenge."

"I have a brother and one nephew who are special children," she volunteers. "While doing that 'Extra Challenge' episode, I kept having instant flashbacks, remembering how hard it was for my mother and sister."

She became so fond of her ward in Canada, that she has remained in touch with him. "I just sent him a tape of our episode and also a copy of Profile (the official magazine of Forever Flawless)."

New goals

Now she is seriously considering setting up a home-care business alongside her other ventures—Gal's Bakery, a 7-11 store in Antipolo, the Cogeo Market Ventures Corporation, and Crystal Clear Purified Drinking Water.

In fact, while still in Canada—and moving on to the United States—LT did her research. "I visited at least three home-care businesses owned by friends in San Francisco. They provide not just the care-giving proper; they also have a nutritionist and a doctor on board."

She is very much aware that such an enterprise requires a lot of sacrifice. "It's not a business in the traditional sense; it's more like a service. I hope I can find a way to tie up with the government."

Nurturing earth mother? It's a seldom-seen side of the glamour queen.

Bonding time

LT is also a devoted wife to Rudy Fernandez and doting mom to two sons, 20-year-old Ralph and 19-year-old Renz.

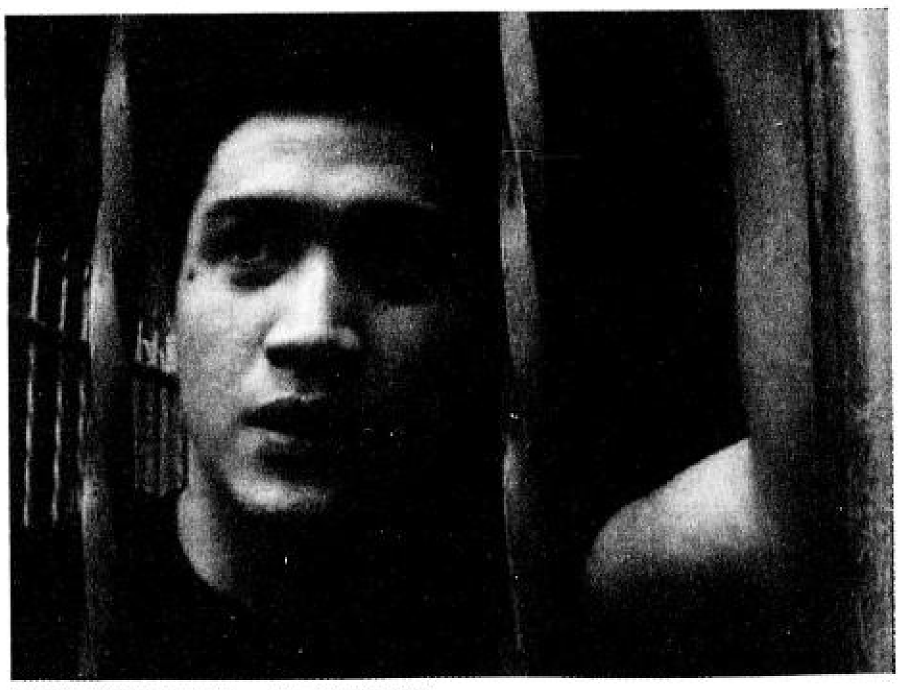
She describes herself as a "very cool" mom.

"Boy talk is Rudy's territory," she says. "Shopping is where I come in. My sons and I, we shop with their girlfriends. That's our bonding time. But we enjoy a lot of other things together. As a family, we go to church. We watch movies. We have dinners, at home and in restaurants. And we even go scuba-diving."

Obviously, this is another secret of her eternal youth. "I really look forward to spending time with my loved ones."

Andoy Ranay: Cult hero, and gay

The actor-director fought for his craft because he knew all along he would succeed



'DIREK' RUDOLPH. "I'm acting for my art."

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

DIRECTOR and thespian Andoy Ranay had a very productive and enjoyable 2004, as his presence was prominently felt on-screen and behind the scenes.

He worked for nine months on ABS-CBN's undersea *fantaserye*, "Marina," a huge endeavor that required him to share directorial duties with colleague Wenn Deramas.

After the physically demanding show wrapped up last month, the 31-year-old took the time between TV projects to enjoy a much-needed vacation. Part of this down time was spent acting in the play "Laro," which was staged at the CCP, as well as in the second Cris Pablo-helmed digital movie, "Bathhouse."

The successful indie movie, "Duda," last March made him a gay cult hero of sorts. Giving wondrous life to the queer character Cris (the director's namesake) in that first commercially screened digital effort was an extremely rewarding undertaking for Ranay.

"They didn't have money," he recalls. "They were really struggling. Since I was the lead actor, I thought that, if I failed, the whole movie would fail. I auditioned for the role. I didn't know their group [Grupong Sinehan], but when I met them, I felt at home."

Promoting "Duda" also gave Ranay a renewed optimism for local films and audiences, as opposed to many opinions that have sounded the death knell for the Filipino film industry. .

"The industry can thrive because of many new creative people. New directors are emerging with new ideas. I think it's really not going down the drain. We're just not making enough small, low-budgeted projects," he explains.

Star treatment

Ranay relates that he felt like a popular movie star abroad when "Duda" made the rounds of several film festivals. He says the foreign press thought he and his cast-mates were mainstream actors in the Philippines.

"We were treated really well, *kulang na lang*, limo [short of sending us a limousine]."

He cites a memorable exhibition in New York: "I was there for the Asian-American International Film Festival last July. The movie was very well-received.

"During my Q & A after the screening, an audience member asked how much the film's budget was. I told them that we made it for only P150,000—that's like, $3,000—and they stood up and clapped."

"Direk Andoy" (short for "Randolph") is no stranger to any aspect of his chosen profession.

He has acted since he was in his teens as a Theater Arts student in UP Diliman. Then he landed a job at ABS-CBN as production assistant for the talk show "Mel and Jay" in 1995.

Eventually, he became a segment producer and an assistant director on different shows.

He finally got his first directing project with the soap, "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan" in 2002.

All for love

As a kid, Ranay had to declare his love for the arts to his father, who wanted him to be a doctor.

"I had to fight for it," he says. "I told him, 'This is what I want. This is what I love and I'm going to pursue it. I'm going to be famous someday.' When I turned 31 last August, he told me during my party, 'I'm so proud of you. I was not so supportive about this before, and I'm so sorry.'"

Ranay opens himself up to learning new things about the job and constantly chal-

ANDOY/2

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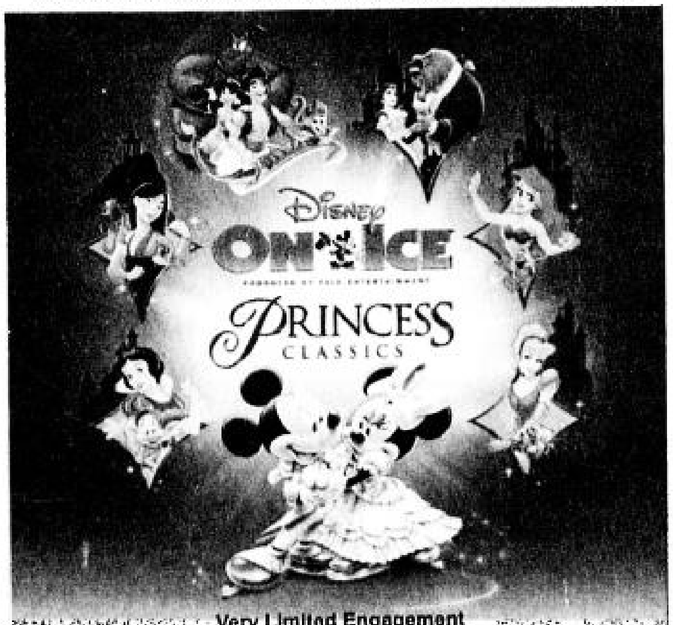

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Solving one's own murder, 'Dynasty' history on Hallmark

SHOW TIME

THE NEW year begins with a bang as Hallmark Channel presents program highlights for January.

In "Five Days to Midnight" today and tomorrow, mild mannered professor JT Newmeyer (Oscar and Golden Globe winner Timothy Hutton) seems to be having a hell of a day. It is both a time for celebration and a cause for mourning. He anticipates the birthday of his daughter and only child Jesse (Gage Golightly) and commemorates the anniversary of his wife's death.

But the day turns alarming when a mysterious package arrives containing shocking evidence of his own murder five days later. He launches a desperate attempt to foil the prophecy of his own murder.

In "Fabio Montale" (Part I, Jan. 9; Part II, Jan. 13 and Part III, Jan. 16) Marseille crime squad superintendent Fabio Montale (Alain Delon) is looking forward to his well-earned retirement, but the good life he plans on enjoying takes a back seat when a series of crimes turns his well-ordered world upside down.

He must prevent his childhood friends from being murdered, train the young woman who takes over from him, solve the murder of his nephew's death—all while fighting the Marseille underworld and the Mafia.

Greed, manipulation

"Dynasty: Behind The Sex, Greed and Manipulation" (premieres Jan. 23) gives viewers the inside scoop on what was then the greatest show on earth—from the studio in-fighting, the star fits, the scandals, to the gossip and the greed.

Creators Esther and Richard Shapiro had a brilliant idea that would rival the blockbuster television soap "Dallas" and they called in "the most prolific producer in the history of television," Aaron Spelling, to pull the whole thing off. He assembled a spectacular cast of pros including John Forsythe, Linda Evans and Heather Locklear.

Spelling needed someone to bring the series to life and he seduced a real vamp to spice up the second season. Her name is Joan Collins and, as Alexis Carrington, she became a Machiavellian manipulator who left competition in the dust. Spelling threw in a few catfights plus an infamous wedding-day massacre and "Dynasty" shot up to No.

SOLVING/3

TIMOTHY HUTTON in "5 Days to Midnight"

Andoy Ranay: Cult hero...

From page 1

lenges himself to further understand the language of filmmaking.

He even reads self-help books to get a deeper insight into the disparate personalities and temperaments of his actors.

He assumes that they can do the job efficiently despite whatever hang-ups they may have, but even his famous tolerance has its limits: "I tell them straight to their faces *kapag bobo sila* [when they're being dumb]. *Nakakagigil kasi* [It's infuriating]. There are only two kinds of actors: those who have talent, and those who don't."

Being openly gay has never been an obstacle for him. In fact, he says, "I think it is one of my biggest advantages, because the film and television industry here has respect for creative gay people. They respect you if you're good.

"I was never discriminated against because I'm gay. Most of the powerful people are homosexuals—gays and lesbians—they dominate the industry and rule it.

"So don't f—k with us," he adds as a joke.

Moving on

Starring in "Duda" has made him known to many other gay people. He still finds it baffling that, during one visit to a new Malate bar, he instantly became the center of attraction. That made him extremely conscious. The customers ogled him and, as he passed them by, whispered, "Duda."

But because it happened soon after he broke up with his partner, the incident served to boost his self-esteem.

Fan e-mail for his performance as Cris has yet to stop arriving, but Ranay believes it's time for him to move on. He feels privileged to have been chosen to portray another character in "Bathhouse."

He describes his new role, Genesis, as "*baklang-bakla* [extremely gay]."

"Cris is the more difficult role because of his roller-coater emotions," the actor says. "This supporting character Genesis is simpler. He has seen everything in the bathhouse and the people who come around, so he's kind of jaded."

Acting alongside younger lead actors has made the experience memorable as well.

"They really worked hard," he recounts. "They have the passion; they have the fire. It's rare that newcomers are given heavy roles, especially in mainstream cinema. It's a good thing there's a Cris Pablo who makes these small movies. He has a vision and he knows what he's doing. We support that."

Ranay looks forward to portraying even more challenging and radically different roles in the future.

His unassailable reason: "*Ayoko ng pare-parehong* [I don't like to do the same] roles. I'm not acting for fame. I'm acting for my art."

"Bathhouse" had a premiere screening on Dec. 20, at Robinson's Galleria; regular screenings were from Dec. 21 to 24.

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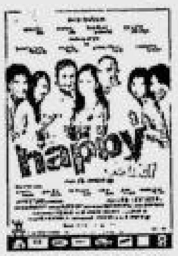
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8 SIGAW
9 ENTENG KABISOTE
10 SIGAW

sm city southmall
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 AISHITE IMASU 1941
3 LASTIKMAN
4 ENTENG KABISOTE
5 MANO PO 3
6 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
7 ENTENG KABISOTE
8 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
9 SIGAW
10 MANO PO 3

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1 MANO PO 3
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
5 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
6 LASTIKMAN
7 AISHITE IMASU 1941
8 SIGAW

sm city bicutan
1 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
2 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
3 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
4 LASTIKMAN

sm cinema tutuban
1 LASTIKMAN
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
4 MANO PO 3

sm supercenter sucat
1 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
3 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
4 LASTIKMAN

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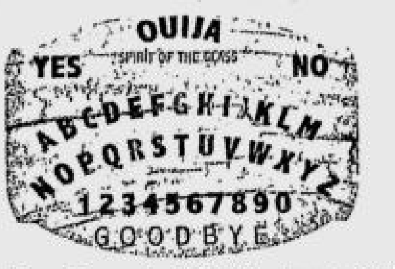

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2 ENTENG KABISOTE

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5 GOLD (DOLBY) AISHITE IMASU 1941
6 GOLD (SDDS) SIGAW
7 GOLD (DOLBY) LASTIKMAN
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9 [illegible] HAPPY TOGETHER
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2 AISHITE IMASU 1941

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4 HAPPY TOGETHER
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6 SIGAW

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Solving one's own...

From page 2

1. This is the candid inside story of the TV show that defined the '80s.

'Just Cause'

In "Just Cause" (starts Jan. 5), Alexandra DeMonaco (Elizabeth Lackey) has finished serving a five-year prison term for a crime she did not commit. A degree from an Internet law school is her trump card. Ex-cons though, can't exactly practice law, so she makes a deal with San Francisco lawyer Hamilton Whitney (Richard Thomas). She promises to be the best paralegal he will ever have in exchange for helping her petition a pardon from the governor.

Alex and Whitney, together with law firm associate Patrick Heller (Shaun Benson), face enormous odds to take on cases no one else will touch, all for the sake of fighting for a just cause.

"Child of Our Time" (Jan. 7) catalogues a new British generation as they develop from the womb into adulthood. The experiment involves 25 varying families and follows the children over a 25-year period. It aims to uncover the truth behind a number of theories concerning child growth and development such as whether playing music or talking to a baby in a womb has an impact and how much of the personality is inherited.

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SIGAW PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50	ENTENG KABISOTE GP 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS PG13 12:50,3:10,5:30,7:50
SO HAPPY TOGETHER PG13	AISHITE IMASU 1941 PG13 1:20,3:35,5:50,8:05	MANO PO 3 GP 12:40,3:00,5:20,7:40

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3 Lastikman	1 Enteng Kabisote	1 Sigaw
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1	MANO PO 3	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50	GP
2	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS	12:25, 2:55, 5:20, 7:45, 10:20	PG-13
3	ENTENG KABISOTE	12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:10	GP
4	HAPPY TOGETHER	12:05, 2:35, 5:05 7:35, 10:30	PG-13

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① MANO PO 3
FS 12:20PM, 2:45PM 5:10PM, 7:35PM, LMF 10PM (GP)

② ENTENG KABISOTE
FS 11:20PM, 2PM, 4:40PM, 7:20PM, LMF 10PM (GP)

③ SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
FS 11:40AM, 2PM, 4:20PM 6:40PM, LMF 9PM (PG-13)

④ HAPPY TOGETHER
(PG-13)

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LASTIKMAN	10:55 12:00 1:10 2:15 3:25 4:30 5:40 6:45 7:55 9:00
MANO PO 3	12:30 2:45 5:00 7:15 9:30
PANAGHOY SA SUBA	1:55 4:20 6:45 9:10
SIGAW	12:35 2:45 4:55 7:05 9:15
SO HAPPY TOGETHER	12:35 2:45 4:55 7:05 9:15
SPIRIT OF THE GLASS	12:35 2:45 4:55 7:05 9:15

ALI MALL CINEMAS

Cinema	Sound	Movie	Times
3	Dolby	SIGAW	11:30 1:40 3:50 6:00 8:10
4	SDDS	ENTENG KABISOTE	11:15 2:10 5:05 8:00
5	dts	SPIRIT OF THE GLASS	11:30 1:40 3:50 6:00 8:10
6	Dolby	MANO PO 3	11:20 1:35 3:50 6:05 8:20
7	Dolby	PANAGHOY SA SUBA	10:20 12:45 3:10 5:35 8:00

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TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	SALAT SA LIGAYA
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	AISHITE MASU (1941)
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1,2,3 & 4	NATIONAL TREASURE / BRIDGET JONES / SPIDERMAN 2 / SHREK 2
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CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KALABIT
CINEMA-2	SALAT
CINEMA-3	ONE MISSED CALL
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	POLAR EXPRESS
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CINEMA-6	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-7	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-8	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HAROLD & KUMAR
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ALEXANDER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	BAD SANTA
CINEMA-12	NATIONAL TREASURE
CINEMA-14	HONEY
CINEMA-15	B'CUZ OF U
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	NATIONAL TREASURE
CINEMA-1	PASIYAM
CINEMA-2	BRIDGET JONES
CINEMA-4	POLAR EXPRESS
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
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1 MANO PO 3 • THX 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
3 LASTIKMAN 11:50 2:25 4:55 7:25 9:50
4 SIGAW 11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40
5 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:30 12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00
6 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
7 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
8 AISHITE IMASU 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
9 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 12:50 3:00 5:10 7:20 9:30
10 MANO PO 3 11:30 2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:15 1:50 4:25 7:00 9:40
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
3 AISHITE IMASU 10:10 12:15 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:50 10:00
4 LASTIKMAN 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
6 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:10 12:15 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:25 10:00
7 MANO PO 3 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 MANO PO 3 10:00 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:45 10:35
2 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:10 12:40 3:10 5:40 8:10 10:30
3 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:35 1:00 3:25 5:50 8:15 10:30
4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
5 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 10:35 1:00 3:25 5:50 8:15 10:30
6 LASTIKMAN 10:10 12:40 3:10 5:40 8:10 10:30
7 AISHITE IMASU 10:35 1:00 3:25 5:50 8:15 10:35
8 SIGAW 10:00 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:45 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 SIGAW 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
2 MANO PO 3 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
3 LASTIKMAN 10:15 12:45 3:15 5:45 8:25
4 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:30 3:50 6:10 8:30
5 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 8:55
6 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS 10:40 1:05 3:30 5:55 8:25
7 ENTENG KABISOTE 10:15 12:40 3:15 5:50 8:25
8 AISHITE IMASU 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:00

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1 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 SIGAW
4 MANO PO 3

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1 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
2 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3 ENTENG KABISOTE
4 LASTIKMAN

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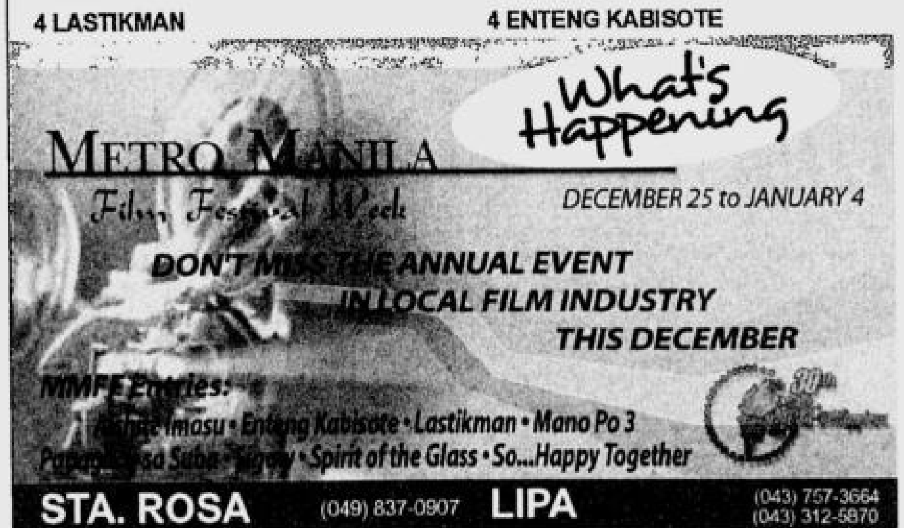
2 SIGAW
3 LASTIKMAN
4 ENTENG KABISOTE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4 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
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3 SIGAW
4 AISHITE IMASU
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2 LASTIKMAN
3 ENTENG KABISOTE
4 MANO PO 3

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5 SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
6 PANAGHOY SA SUBA

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'MEET THE FOCKERS'

Stars make fools of themselves

AN IMPROVEMENT on "Meet the Parents," "Fockers" stars (from left) Danner, Polo, De Niro, Stiller, Hoffman and Streisand

REVIEW

NEW YORK—"Meet the Fockers" could have been one of those sequels that tries desperately to capitalize on the unexpected success of the original movie—in this case, "Meet the Parents," which was a huge hit in 2000.

(Admit it: That's how it looked to you, too, even if you liked "Meet the Parents.")

So it's an unexpected pleasure to report that "Fockers" is an improvement on "Parents"—whose jokes dragged on too long—thanks largely to the presence of Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand, who play Ben Stiller's parents.

Having a ball

Streisand hasn't appeared in a movie since "The Mirror Has Two Faces" in 1996, and the few films she made in the '80s and '90s ("Yentl," "Nuts," "The Prince of Tides") didn't exactly allow her to show off her comedic timing. It's easy to forget that this funny woman made her film debut in 1968's "Funny Girl"—and won a best-actress Oscar in the process.

Here, as Roz Focker, she seems like she's having an absolute ball and looks just radiant, even under that same big permed hairdo she donned for "A Star Is Born" and "The Main Event" in the late '70s.

As a painfully candid and wildly uninhibited sex therapist, she gets to verbally bounce off Hoffman (playing Bernie Focker, Greg Focker's overly friendly dad) and literally bounce off Robert De Niro, reprising his role as humorless former CIA agent Jack Byrnes, when she gives him a much-needed massage.

Streisand gets to be goofy. She gets to smile. She gets to laugh. She and Hoffman look like they're having so much fun together, it's impossible not to laugh along with them.

Cat flushes dog

But "Meet the Fockers" is still laden with the same obligatory toilet humor as its predecessor, as Greg introduces his mother and father to the uptight, waspy parents of his fiancee, Pam (Teri Polo). After all, director Jay Roach is back at the helm, along with "Meet the Parents" screenwriters Jim Herzfeld and John Hamburg.

The cherubic-looking grandson of Jack and Dina Byrnes (Blythe Danner, also back from part one) repeatedly makes the baby sign-language motion for poop (and his first word is one we can't repeat here). When the Byrneses drive down to Florida to meet the Fockers (in Jack's Kevlar-covered, Plexiglass-windowed motor home), their genius cat flushes the Focker's dog down the toilet. (You've seen this sight gag a million times in the TV ads, and it's no funnier seeing the tiny canine, shivering and covered in blue goo, when you're sitting in the theater.)

The technologically challenged Bernie, who can't figure out his answering machine, whines to Roz on the outgoing message about how he longs to make a chimichanga, even though it gives him gas. Roz whines back at him to go ahead and make a chimichanga—which comes out as, "So make a chimi . . . beep!"

The gag is mildly funny the first time. By the third time, it's painful.

Lovely, sweet

Instead of a disastrous water volleyball game, there's a disastrous backyard football game. Instead of . . . You get the point.

But there are enough redeeming moments, including a tour-de-force sequence involving baby Jack, super glue, "Scarface" and a bottle of rum.

And Dina Byrnes gets back in touch with her inner tigress after decades of marriage (thanks to some sock-puppet pointers from Roz) in a way that's sort of lovely and sweet—and funny, too.

Simply the idea of all these stars together—making fools of themselves on the same screen despite their individually impressive filmographies—is enough of an absurdly funny prospect to make the movie worth seeing.

"Meet the Fockers," a Universal Pictures release, runs 114 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.

AP

Film on Rwanda genocide helps ease innkeeper's pain

NEW YORK—Paul Rusesabagina still has sleepless nights. And when he does nod off, he still has nightmares.

Witnessing wholesale slaughter and narrowly eluding death remains fresh for the hotel manager who saved 1,268 people during Rwanda's genocide a decade ago.

For a long time, he was bitter. Somehow, though, the movie "Hotel Rwanda" has helped him allay some of that pain—which stemmed from the world ignoring the hellish situation.

"Whenever I talk about the genocide, whenever I will see the movie, I see it as if it was happening yesterday, or today in the morning," says Rusesabagina, 50, who now runs a heavy-duty transport business in Zambia.

His family lives in Belgium, where he visits often. A cement bond exists among him, his wife and four children, he says, because they all feel there's almost nothing they can go through now that could top what they've already endured. They can always tell each other: "We have shared worse."

Haunted, shell-shocked

Don Cheadle, who plays Rusesabagina, told The Associated Press he thought he'd find a much more tragic figure.

"I expected to find somebody who was really haunted and really shell-shocked in a way. Because the stories I had read and the tapes I had seen and the accountings I had heard were horrific, and I just couldn't imagine myself, what I would be like, if I had experienced and witnessed all of that," says the actor, who's received a Golden Globe nomination for his performance as Rusesabagina.

"But meeting him and spending time with him and having dinner with him and getting drunk with him and just hanging out with him in that way, it made perfect sense once I got to know him.

"Paul sees every day since he got away from there as a bonus. Every day is like, 'I'm alive!' ... Every day he thought he was going to die. He woke up with that thought every day, like: 'I wonder how I'm going to die today. I wonder where it's going to happen in the hotel. I wonder what it's going to be with. Am I going to get shot? Is it gonna be a machete? Is somebody going to throw me off the roof?'"

Hundreds of thousands

"That was my day-to-day life," Rusesabagina corroborated in a separate interview with the AP.

The movie has a few scenes where it appears Rusesabagina is going to be killed. Rwanda's Hutu extremists were massacring Tutsis (and moderate Hutus), and they were livid that he was sheltering people they wanted to slaughter. (In 100 days, hundreds of thousands were slain.)

In one instance he escaped simply by pointing soldiers who asked about the hotel manager's whereabouts in one direction while walking in another. In other instances, he finagles his way out of death by buying off soldiers with jewels or a general with Cohibas and single-malt scotch.

The movie depicts Rusesabagina as a man who had no intention of becoming a modern African version of Oskar Schindler. Early on, he tells wife Tatiana (played by Sophie Okonedo) who wants to help someone: "He's not family. Family is all that matters."

'Ultimately uplifting'

As the nationwide murderous rage spirals out of control, Rusesabagina transforms. By the end, the innkeeper's attitude is: "There's always room."

For that reason, Cheadle thinks the movie is "ultimately uplifting."

"It's a love story in the middle of a thriller, to put it in movie terms," he says, hoping that people don't just look at it as a movie about mass murder and go: '"Oh, God, this is going to be a downer ...' I hope everyone who does a report about this movie reports that it's not ... it's not a bloodfest."

It's so relatively unbloody that some critics have complained that "Hotel Rwanda," which is up for a best dramatic film Golden Globe, downplays the colossal carnage.

Director/screenwriter Terry George has an answer for that: "Documentary is sort of the wine of storytelling, and nonfiction feature film is the brandy, is the distillation of those events into something that's potent."

Where and to whom

The Rwandan strife in 1994 made the briefs packages in newspapers or got short mention at the end of newscasts. (A Time magazine cover story and a front-page Los Angeles Times article were notable exceptions).

Where it happened and to whom—in other words, blacks in Africa—is offered as the biggest reason.

"I don't think there's any question," Cheadle says, addressing the issue of race. "I mean, if it was whites ... there would have been much more of a drive" to do something.

George, who directed the 1996 feature "Some Mother's Son" and co-wrote the Jim Sheridan films "In the Name of the Father" and "The Boxer," agrees.

"For me, there's a subliminal, subconscious racism that we have in the West that does not equate the value of African life with a Western life," he says.

No intervention

And you can even quantify it, he maintains. The death of 18 US soldiers were more important than nearly a million Africans, he says, alluding to how the United States has been reluctant to send a peace mission to Africa ever since 1993, when 18 American troops were killed by Somali fighters.

Intervention would have been easy, he avers, saying the "raggle-taggle army" wielding nothing more than clubs, machetes and knives could have been routed.

President Clinton and the United Nations subsequently apologized for failing to intervene. And Romeo Dallaire, the Canadian general whose UN peacekeepers had to stand by helplessly as events unfolded, went into a suicidal depression. (A composite character based on Dallaire is played by Nick Nolte, in a smartly subdued supporting performance).

Rwanda—a landlocked former Belgian colony with 8 million people—has kept a relative peace, though internally the Hutus and the Tutsis remain wary of each other and externally the country continues to clash with neighboring Congo.

Rusesabagina has his doubts about just how real and lasting the peace is.

"There is no better place to live than Rwanda," he says. "That is my home."

He visited last year. But will he live there again? "I'm not really in a hurry."

AP

DON CHEADLE as Rusesabagina in "Hotel Rwanda"

PAUL RUSESABAGINA, the hotel manager

INQUIRER

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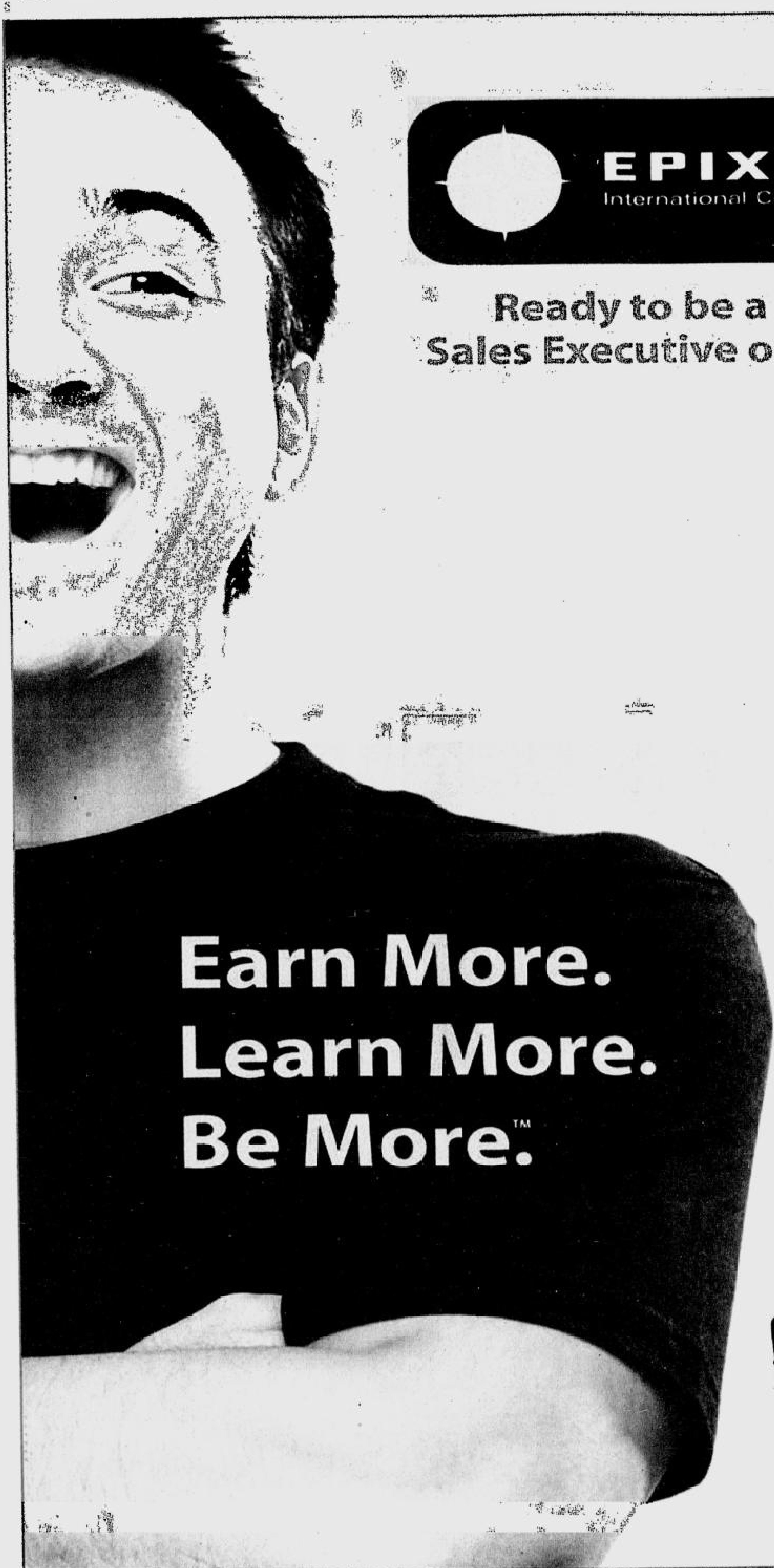
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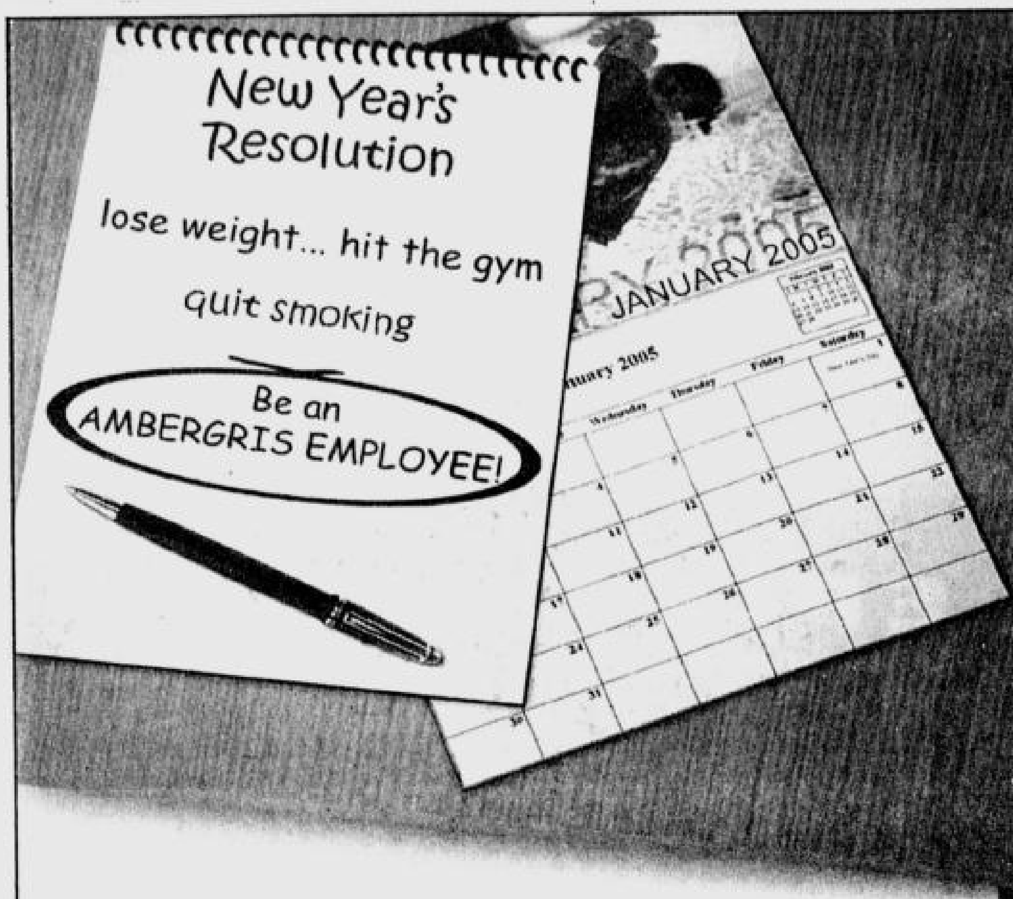

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- With at least 5 years professional experience as project manager
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- Candidate must have a Bachelor's Degree in Management, Mass Communications or relevant fields
- Preferably with post-graduate degree in related fields or its equivalent
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4/F Fil-Garcia Tower, Kalayaan Avenue cor. Mayaman Street, Diliman, Quezon City

You may also email your resumés to **humanresources@haribon.org.ph** or **director@haribon.org.ph.** Only short-listed candidates will be called for an interview. Walk-in applicants will not be entertained.

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Save the Children Federation, Inc. is a US-based non-profit organization working in over forty countries, including the United States, and serving more than 15 million children and their families, implementing community development projects that create lasting, positive change in the lives of disadvantaged children and adolescents. Save the Children is currently searching for qualified candidates for the following vacancies:

NATIONAL PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE & SEXUAL HEALTH - Manila (Code: NC-ARSH)

Duties & responsibilities:

- Develop project proposals, program activities & materials Provide technical support and assistance to program areas (West Visayas & Metro Manila); review all plans and activities relative to consistency with the program's framework
- Monitor and assess the conduct of program activities and prepare narrative status report ; ensure that all activities and outputs are accomplished on time and according to desired quality
- Prepare all communications to partner agencies (USAID, DOH, etc.); serve as liaison and coordinate meetings with partner agencies at the national and local levels
- Co-facilitate in workshops and trainings

Minimum requirements:

- at least 5 years experience in developing and managing ARSH programs
- master's degree in Social Sciences, Behavioral Sciences, Social Work or Guidance and Counseling or equivalent experience
- willing to travel to program sites in Visayas and Mindanao
- excellent oral and written communication skills, particularly proposal writing
- proficient in MS Office applications

PROGRAM TECHNICAL COORDINATOR FOR ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH – Manila (Code: PTC-ARSH)

Duties & responsibilities:

- Conceptualize and implement projects that support the accomplishment of ARSH goals and objectives of the Metro Manila Program
- Provide technical inputs for all on-going activities/projects
- Lead in monitoring, evaluating and documenting outcomes of program interventions
- Ensure strong community participation and mobilization
- Develop linkages with different organizations (government, non-government, private sector) towards building support network
- Organize and sustain pool of community volunteers
- Formulate a comprehensive capacity building plan for volunteers

Minimum requirements:

- at least 5 years experience in community work, particularly with adolescents and with emphasis on reproductive health
- bachelor's degree in social work, community development, social/behavioral sciences, guidance & counseling.; graduate studies a plus
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- computer literate

PROGRAM TECHNICAL COORDINATOR FOR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH – Sulu (Code: PTC-MCH)

Duties & responsibilities:

- Develop and facilitate project interventions and ensure implementation at the community level
- Oversee the evaluation and documentation of effects of project interventions
- Organize inter-municipal trainings for partners
- Attend planning meetings at the Integrated Provincial Health Office and at the regional level to strengthen and improve partnership coordination
- Prepare proposals on Family Planning component to enhance project's quality and outreach
- Assist in linking Municipal Health Commitee and Barangay Health Commitee as well as the Barangay Development Council with resource agencies
- Assist in the conduct of special studies and researches

Minimum requirements:

- at least 5 years experience in community health development projects with signficant exposure in management of Maternal & Child Health programs
- educational background in medicine, nursing, public health or any health-related field; possession of a post graduate degree is highly desirable
- computer literacy is a must
- excellent communication and interpersonal skills, culture-sensitive

CURRICULUM SPECIALIST – Cotabato City (Code: CurSpec)

Duties & responsibilities

- Review and identify strengths and weaknesses of existing curricula and instructional materials for math, science and English
- Develop new curriculum units and lesson plans that address documented weaknesses in content and student performance
- Assess training needs of teachers & conduct initial train-the-trainer workshops for education faculty, Dep Ed supervisors and school-based master teachers
- Create mentor teams to provide ongoing technical assistance to teachers
- Establish systems for monitoring application of the curricula and instructional materials
- Establish student baseline achievement data to evaluate student progress

Minimum requirements:

- at least 6 years experience in curriculum and instructional materials development and teacher training and education, with focus on English, science or mathematics
- willing to travel frequently to project sites in Datu Piang, Maguindanao; Midsayap, North Cotabato; Talipao, Sulu; and Dinas, Zamboanga del Sur
- experience in Mindanao education, particularly in the public education sector
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- master's degree in education or equivalent experience
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Attractive and highly competitive compensation and benefits package awaits the successful applicants. Interested parties may submit their resumes on or before January 7, 2005 to: *Thru mail* - Save the Children Federation, Inc., No.1 Encarnacion Street corner Lapu-Lapu Avenue, Magallanes Village, Makati City, Metro Manila. *Thru fax:* (632) 853-02-15. *Thru e-mail:* allaneza@savechildren.org Please indicate code in subject line.

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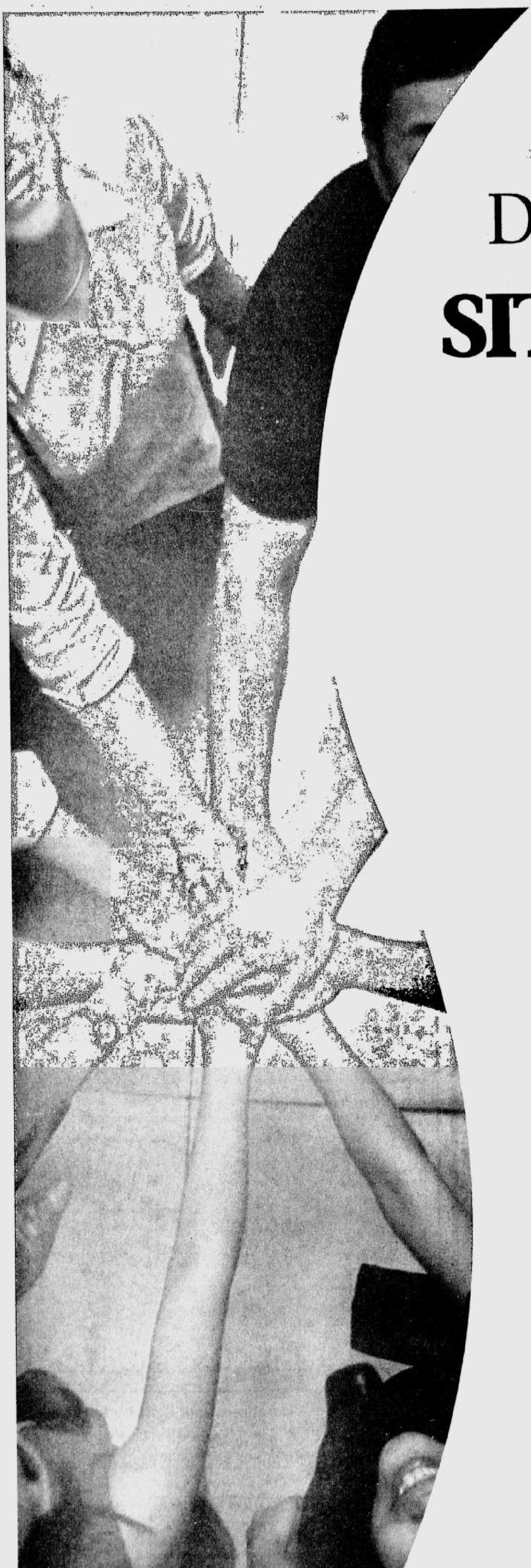

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- Preferably graduate of Psychology or Accounting
- With 3-5 years experience in related field
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- Can work independently & with decision making skills
- Flexible, reliable, analytical and a team player

CUSTOMER SERVICE STAFF

- Graduate of any course
- Single, not more than 25 years old, with pleasing personality
- Preferably with medical background / training

FAMILY DRIVER

- Not more than 40 years old
- With NBI clearance

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Globalstride is a premier outsourced customer service solutions provider. We provide the best in class CRM solutions to global companies at a lower cost through our offshore customer contact centers. Through a series of operational and technology partnerships with leading companies worldwide, GLOBALSTRIDE is uniquely positioned to handle customer service needs for a full range of contact channels, technologies, and languages.

CUSTOMER CARE SPECIALISTS

Job Responsibilities:
- Offer product & services through the telephone & other specified means of communication to a target list of customers in behalf of the product/services being offered.
- Provide necessary information about the product & services.
- Document all pertinent customer data using client prescribed form
- Meet the productivity requirements of clients on qualified calls.

Job Requirements:
- Bachelor's degree holders of any 4-year course with excellent interpersonal and communication skills particularly using American grammar, diction, intonation, inflection, intonation and articulation.
- Previous experience in customer relation, management, sales or marketing is an advantage.
- Ability to speak any foreign language (Spanish, Chinese, French, etc.) is a plus.

PROGRAM MANAGERS

Job Responsibilities:
- Responsible in planning, implementing and directing business proposals and initiatives of the company

Job Requirements:
- Must have extensive experience in project and client management acquired in customer service or telesales.
- With at least 2 to 3 years of managerial or supervisory experience in project/account management and must have established analytical ability, good interpersonal skills and exceptional verbal and written communication
- MBA degree from AIM/ADMU/UP is an advantage.
- Preferably 25-35 years of age with acquired experience in telesales management

SENIOR/SALES TRAINERS

Job Responsibilities:
- Design and conduct training programs on Sales and Customer Service and facilitate sales coaching sessions.
- Conduct regular on-floor Sales and Customer Service audit or call monitoring sessions with QA to capture lapses in sales techniques, pitch, as well as inculcate sales & customer service mindset/orientation.
- Train Trainers, Coaches, and Team Leaders on Sales and Customer Service.
- Revisit/audit programs and agents' skills levels and develop appropriate interventions.

Job Requirements:
- Must be degree holders preferably related to Sales and Marketing or Communications and Languages disciplines
- Must have established track record in Sales or Customer Service training gained from at least 3 years working experience in a call center or in a service oriented environment
- Exceptional communication skills, developed service orientation, strong people skills and proficiency in conducting training needs assessments and measurements are requisites
- Passion for Sales and Customer Service training and established course design and facilitation skills
- Experienced in developing skills-build up strategies for individuals or groups; good coaching skills
- Must be team-player, self-starter, organized and analytic

CREDIT AND COLLECTIONS OFFICER

Job Responsibilities:
- Maintain Accounts Receivable, general and subsidiary records
- Prepare aging and other analyses for management
- Establish and maintain credit evaluation system
- Ensure adherence to credit and collection policies
- Prepare and transmit Statement of Accounts to clients and coordinate with internal Client Services for follow-up

Job Requirements:
- Accounting or Business Graduate
- At least 5 years experience, last 2 in supervisory capacity, in credit and collection, internal or external audit
- Expected to be detail-oriented and pro-active with above average communication skills (written and oral)
- Experience in both manual and automated financial systems is a plus

QUALITY ASSURANCE OFFICERS

Job Responsibilities:
- Conduct process reviews and compliance audit based on specified key controls
- Analyze statistical data for service standards and process measurements for corrective actions
- Monitor calls to ensure conformity with customer requirements and coordinate with other departments to manage customer issues

Job Requirements:
- Candidates should be degree holders with excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Must have keen eye for detail, analytical and with strong inclination in dealing with processes.
- Candidates should have good sense of judgment, systematic and team oriented.
- Good probing skills and QA mindset have an advantage

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST / SUPERVISOR

Job Responsibilities:
- Organize and ensure efficiency of internal and external communication systems

Job Requirements:
- Graduate of preferably any Behavioral Science, Organizational Communications and Advertising courses
- At least 2-years significant work-related experience in handling organizational communications preferably in a manufacturing set-up with well-developed communication skills, both oral and written
- Demonstrated capability in ensuring workplace harmony through effective management of internal and external communications, including community relations and newsletter writing
- Well-founded interpersonal skills and recognized ability to work with all levels of the organization.
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Our company is in need of the following positions for various drilling & production projects of **POCOMWELL LIMITED** in Asia, Middle East & West Africa

Drilling Personnel

Driller / Asst. Driller – must hold a valid IWCF or IADC certificate. At least 3 years offshore experience.
Crane Operator – must hold a valid crane operator certificate. At least 3 years offshore experience
Crane Operator – must hold a valid crane operator certificate. With experience in handling Seatrax crane.
Derrickman – with 2 years experience as derrickman in offshore oil exploration rig.
Floorman / Roughneck – with 2 years experience as roughneck in offshore oil exploration rig
Pumpman – with 2 years experience as pumpman in offshore oil exploration rig or tanker vessel
Barge Operator – must hold a valid crane operator certificate with at least 3 years offshore experience.
Toolpusher – must hold a valid IWCF or IADC certificate with at least 5 years offshore experience as driller or toolpusher.

Other Drilling Personnel

Mechanic – with 3 years offshore experience as mechanic.
Motorman – with 3 years experience as motorman in an offshore oil exploration rig or tanker vessel.
Welder – must be a certified welder with onshore or offshore experience.
Boilermaker / Fitter – must be a certified welder with onshore or offshore experience.
Painter Foreman / Painter – with experience in technical mechanical blasting & spray painting, paint application.
Electrician – with at least 5 years offshore experience with perfect understanding of electrical diagram.
Storekeeper / Material Controller – with 2 years experience as storekeeper on onshore / offshore oil drilling rig.

Production Personnel

Production Supervisor – with experience in oil & gas plant & knowledge in Hydrocarbon processing. With good leadership skills.
Production / Process Operator – with experience in oil & gas plant and knowledge in Hydrocarbon processing.
Mechanical Technician – with experience in oil & gas plant. Offshore experience is preferred.
Instrument Technician – with 2 years experience on offshore / 5 years onshore oil production platform or refinery.
Electrical Technician – with 2 years experience on offshore / 5 years onshore oil production platform or refinery.
Laboratory Technician – with 2 years experience as Lab technician in the hydrocarbon processing plant.
Diver – must hold a valid diver certificate recognized by IMCA (International Marine Contractors Association). With welding knowledge is an advantage.
Safety Officer / HSE – with experience as offshore safety officer. With knowledge in administration of PTW system.

Supervisory Level Personnel

Electrical Engineer Specialist – BS Electrical Engineering graduate with experience in Electrical Engineering & design with application in oil & gas industry.
Mechanical Engineer Specialist – BS Mechanical Engineering graduate with experience in Engineering & Design of Mechanical Systems with experience in Petrochemical Industry
Instrumentation Engineer Specialist – BS Electrical Engineering graduate with experience in Instrumentation Engineering & Design with application in oil & gas industry.
Civil Engineer – BS Civil / Structural Engineering graduate with experience in engineering, design, construction industry including petrochemical heavy construction with a variety of projects plus 1 year minimum field construction experience.
Instrument Drafting Designer – BS Electrical / Instrumentation Engineering graduate with experience in design drafting work related to oil & gas industry. With experience in autocad.
Electrical Drafting Designer – BS Electrical Engineering graduate with experience in design drafting work related to oil & gas industry. With experience in autocad.
Drafting Designer (Mechanical & Process) – BS Mechanical Engineering graduate experience in design drafting work related to oil & gas industry. With experience in autocad.
Chief Electrician – BS Electrical Engineering graduate. With 5 years experience in offshore / onshore oil exploration projects
Chief Mechanic – BS Mechanical Engineering graduate. With 5 years experience in offshore / onshore oil exploration projects
Chief Electronic Engineer – BS Electronics Engineering graduate. Knowledge of all technical calculations required for electronic operation of the drilling unit and basic computer skills.

We may consider personnel in all above positions with minimum 5 years onshore experience.

Marine Personnel

Tug Master – Master Mariner or Chief mate licensed with at least 2 years continuous sea going experience. With tugboat experience is an advantage.
Anchor Handling Master – Master Mariner or Chief mate licensed with 2 years continuous sea going experience. Experience in Azimuth Stern Drive or with tug / supply vessel is an advantage.
Dynamic Positioning Operator – with Dynamic Positioning training courses. With valid chief or 2nd mate license, with at least 5 years marine experience.
Ballast Control Operator – with stability courses, GMDSS, General Operator license, chief or 2nd mate license, with at least 5 years marine experience.
Cargo Supervisor – must be a chief or 2nd mate licensed with VLCC experience.
Barge Master – Chief mate licensed with minimum 3 years offshore experience.

Interested parties may apply in person at:
19th Floor, Pearlbank Centre, 146 Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City
Please bring updated curriculum vitaé with picture & photocopies of documents (ie, Passport, seamans book, license, work & training certificates)

You may also e-mail your application at: **recruitment.ope@sos.com.ph**
Please indicate in the subject the position applied for.

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Please visit our website www.sos.com.ph for more job openings.

A well established regional golf company urgently requires candidates for the following positions:

Product Development Assistant

- Bachelor's degree in any business course
- Articulate, competent, committed and consistent. Superb skills in communications, client relations and negotiation
- Computer literate and adept at research and the Internet
- Experience in developing consumer service products is an asset
- International driving license an advantage

Graphic Designer/Copywriter

- Bachelor's degree in any fine arts or mass communications course
- Able to conceptualize and design software based and freehand based creatives
- Knowledge of usual graphic design software and all office applications is an expected requisite.
- Web design skills are an advantage
- Strong writing skills. Experience as a writer is a strong advantage
- Presentable with good communication and presentation skills.
- Single female not more than 28 years of age

EVENTS ASSISTANT (PART-TIME)

- Experience in managing events is a plus but must have experience in working at trade shows or golf tournaments
- Pleasant looks and disposition (Must include photo) with good customer and client relations
- A bachelor's degree in any field is an advantage
- Single female not more than 26 years of age
- This temporary position is based in the Philippines
- Please quote expected remuneration on a per day and per month basis

CUSTOMER SERVICE OFFICER

- Must possess excellent telephone etiquette and have a pleasant disposition
- Call centre management experience an important advantage
- Committed, hardworking and excellent attitude
- Single female not more than 30 years of age

Important requirements:

- Candidate must be prepared to be posted in Singapore or any of our other regional offices and sign a minimum 1 year contract of employment
- A minimum of 5 years working experience is required
- All resumes must include expected gross salary and recently scanned photograph

Qualified candidates can email resumes to hr@oaag.com
Applications that do not meet the above requirements will not be considered.
Closing date for all applications is no later than **3rd January 2005**

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WANTED IMMEDIATELY

SECRETARY

An international development organization has an immediate need for a SECRETARY to provide the entire range of secretarial support to one of its technical offices. The incumbent will type/draft cables, letters, memos, faxes, and other technical documents; prepare handouts and power point presentations; handle telephone calls; will receive, send out, and track required letters and other documents; perform liaison functions within the organization, with Philippine Government counterparts, contractors, and other private sector representatives. The incumbent will also assist the team in coordination of meetings and arrangement of logistics; handle the local and international travel requirements of the members of the team; maintain and update the office's files; will act as file custodian; and, will be performing other duties as may be required. Minimum educational requirement is completion of secondary education. Completion of secretarial course, business school, or college, including typing, office practice, computer course is desirable. At least two (2) years of progressively responsible secretarial or clerical experience is required with one (1) year of this experience from donor agencies, private sector, or government organizations. Excellent command of English (both written and oral); level II typing ability (40 WPM); proficiency in the use of computers (Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, Powerpoint, e-mail, internet, etc.) including basic work operations like printer set-up, files search, virus scanning, etc., are essential.

Competitive salary (including mid-year and year-end bonuses), health and life insurance, and a retirement plan is offered.

Interested persons should send their application letter and comprehensive resumé, **not later than January 14, 2005**, to:

Human Resources Division
P.O. Box EA 423
1000 Ermita, Manila

Philippine TIPS

TUBERCULOSIS INITIATIVES FOR THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Philippine Tuberculosis Initiatives for the Private Sector (Philippine TIPS), a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under USAID Contract Number 492-C-00-02-00031 and implemented by a consortium led by Chemonics International Inc., is in need of experts to fill in the following positions:

1. NETWORK DIRECTOR AND MANAGER

- At least 5 years' relevant experience in managing health programs
- Experience and/or education in tuberculosis management
- Understanding of and familiarity with the private sector, particularly the single practice physicians
- Experience in implementing health training programs
- MD, PhD in public health, management or marketing, or equivalent training

Duration of assignment : January to June 2005
Minimum level of effort : 6 months
Type of assignment : Full-time consultant

2. OPERATIONS OFFICER

- Training and experience in social science and/or health research
- Preferably with knowledge of TB DOTS
- Bachelor's degree in public health, management or marketing or equivalent

Duration of assignment : January to June 2005
Minimum level of effort : 6 months
Type of assignment : Full-time consultant

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING OFFICER

- Training and experience in communications or marketing
- Preferably with knowledge of TB DOTS
- Bachelor's degree in communications, advertising or marketing, or equivalent

Duration of assignment : January to June 2005
Minimum level of effort : 6 months
Type of assignment : Full-time consultant

4. FIELD MANAGER (For Iligan and Dumaguete)

- At least 5 years' relevant experience in program management, particularly in managing health and/or communications programs.
- Experience implementing health training programs
- Understanding and familiarity with the private sector, particularly the single practice physicians
- Bachelor's degree in communication, public health, management or marketing, or the equivalent

Duration of assignment : January to June 2005
Minimum level of effort : 6 months
Type of assignment : Full-time consultant

Qualified applicants are requested to send their expression of interest together with their resumé indicating contact numbers to phil_tips@philips.com on or before January 7 2005.

A PROGRESSIVE AND DYNAMIC COMPANY URGENTLY NEEDS THE FOLLOWING:

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT (CODE: CA)

- ➢ Male/Female
- ➢ Must be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- ➢ Minimum of (3) years experience in all facets of accounting procedures
- ➢ Well versed in all aspects of accounting documents, methods, procedures and government reporting requirements
- ➢ Efficient with pertinent computer software & applications
- ➢ Excellent communication & leadership skills
- ➢ With Good Moral Character & can work under pressure

JR. ACCOUNTANTS (CODE: JRA)

- ➢ Female – 21 to 27 years of age
- ➢ New graduates of Accountancy
- ➢ Above-average oral & written communication skills
- ➢ Can work with minimum supervision
- ➢ Computer Literate
- ➢ Detail Oriented

CREDIT AND COLLECTION OFFICER (CODE: CCO)

- ➢ Male / Female – 21 to 27 years of age
- ➢ College Graduate, preferably with a degree in Accountancy, Finance, Business Administration, Management or Marketing
- ➢ Computer Literate
- ➢ Previous experience gained from collection agencies or similar industries will be an advantage
- ➢ Detail Oriented
- ➢ Willing to do field work

HR OFFICER (CODE: HRO)

- ➢ A Degree in Behavioral Science, Psychology or Industrial Relations
- ➢ Minimum of (3) years experience (gained from the Manpower Service Industry would be an advantage)
- ➢ Thorough working knowledge of all aspects of HR functions
- ➢ Detail Oriented & Results Oriented
- ➢ Computer Literate
- ➢ Excellent oral & Written Communication Skills

Please send your comprehensive resumé to: (Please indicate code on the envelope)

P.O. Box 154
c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer
5th Floor Bldg. B SM-Megamall, EDSA
Mandaluyong City

e-mail: sm_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

FOR EXPANSION IN METRO MANILA, SOUTHERN AND NORTHERN LUZON

OFFICE TRAINEES:

Loan Processor, Posting Clerk, and Bookkeeper

- ➢ Male or Female, Single, not more than 30 years old
- ➢ Graduate of any Business Course
- ➢ Willing to be assigned in different areas
- ➢ With Pleasing Personality, Hardworking, and Trustworthy

FIELD TRAINEES:

Collector, Credit Investigator, and Marketing Man

- ➢ Male, not more than 30 years old
- ➢ At least College level but preferably College graduate
- ➢ Know how to drive motorcycle, with Professional / Non-Professional Driver's license
- ➢ Willing to be assigned in different areas
- ➢ Hardworking, Trustworthy, and can work under pressure

MANAGEMENT TRAINEES:

- ➢ Graduate of Business Course
- ➢ Preferably with marketing experience in financial institutions
- ➢ Willing to be assigned in different areas
- ➢ Willing to undergo training
- ➢ Can lead and motivate people

For qualified applicants, send your resumé to or apply in person at

Advance Credit Corporation 23rd Flr., Tower I, The Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala Ave. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City. Look for Ms. Fe Jose or call at Tel. nos. (02) 886-3389 to 90 or

Advance Credit Corp. Bldg. Melencio Extn. Cor. 29th St., Kapt. Pepe Subd. Cabanatuan City. Look for Ms. Marivic Calica or call at Tel nos. (044) 463-5318; 464-2767 to 68.

A Television Production company is in need of

Associate Producer/ Marketing Director

Applicant must possess the ff:

- ✓ College graduate
- ✓ Excellent in communication skills
- ✓ At least 3 years experience in print or broadcast media

Competitive salary to qualified applicants.

Fax your resumé at 415-8188

WANTED

1. **Export Sales Managers/ Sr. Merchandiser** - Female, 25-30 years old, Good oral & written English, w/ minimum 3 years experience in Export, Hardworking & Computer literate
2. **Fashion Accessories Designer** for Export company minimum 3 years experience, 21-30 years old, Male or Female.

Send resumé to:
834 Felipe Pike St.,
Bagong Ilog, Pasig City
Attn: Roda Martinez 6711649

European based company

SAGE PLUS

is in need of:

MULTIMEDIA DEVELOPER

- with basic Programming
- DataBase Security Management, and
- Flash Action Scripts expertise
- Graphic Design skills a plus

Fax resume to: T426-5125
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How can I be part of the solution, and not the problem, on the web?

DEAR WW: My inbox is full of junk. Not spam, all of it has been sent to me by my "friends." Doesn't anyone know how to use e-mail anymore?

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WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

When it comes to dumb criminals, Albert Dowdy is in a league of his own. The Oregonian broke into a home by smashing a paint can through a glass door. On his way out of the house he stepped in the paint and left a perfect trail back to the motel where he was staying. The police had no trouble finding and arresting him for his crime.

Like Mr. Dowdy, e-mail often leaves a trail right back to the offender. And after getting flooded with joke e-mails from someone, it's hard to take a serious e-mail, well, seriously. Below you'll find tips for being an e-mail role model. For more, check out "Email Rules" by Flynn & Kahn (Amacom, 2003)

Do you respect other people's time? You can forward everything that anyone might ever want to see or forward nothing. Neither is practical. Your challenge is to forward the stuff people need to see and to stop short of wasting their time. The only way to do this is to check in with your e-mailees to see if they'd like to hear more, or less, from you.

Do you write with hidden readers in mind? Ever had someone forward you an e-mail that the original author would hate to have you read? That's why I always try to think of the person that I'd least like to see each e-mail, and then write it with them in mind. If you need to deliver a message you wouldn't want someone else to see, remember you can always call or do it face-to-face.

Do you blow off steam in places other than your e-mail? We can all use a place to blow off a little steam. Go take a challenging yoga class, play a physical game of basketball or just sit in your car and yell. But don't create an electronic paper trail of your rants.

Do you limit your use of all caps, smiley faces, etc.? A well placed :) is just fine. But constant stream of them is like a diet consisting only of Twinkies. AND ALL CAPS IS HARD TO READ AND ANNOYING. Use these and all other gimmicks very selectively.

Do you put a lot of thought into your subject line? If I had a magic wand, I'd make it so that everyone spent as much time writing their subject line as they do writing the rest of the e-mail. An informative subject line really helps me to manage the huge pile of e-mail I get each day. Unfortunately, it's hard to tell most people's subject line from spam. Put more thought into your subject line and your readers will put more thought into your e-mail.

Follow these tips and the only trail you'll leave for your readers is a positive one.

Here are the results from a recent workingwounded.com/ABCnews.com online ballot: Which best describes your feelings about e-mail?

—E-tombed, 50 percent

—E-xcluded, 6.2 percent

—E-cstatic, 43.7 percent

(Mr. Rosner, an internationally syndicated columnist, author and speaker, is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com*.)*

'How can I protect my job?'

From page 10

solve problems but instead bring problems to your organization, you'll soon have a problem looking for another job.

10. Serve. Don't be wary serving others. In tennis, as in life, he who serves best wins. Those who serve best will always have a job, whether you are a tennis player, *sakristan*, masseuse, production planner, CEO, messenger, or sales representative. Serve or get served ... a termination letter.

Quote of the week

"Usually, the role you must play cannot be readily seen from the job description. It goes beyond doing what you must accomplish day in and day out in your work. The first step to being indispensable is to find out the real value of your presence in the organization. Then focus on enhancing that value by playing your role well." (Cecilia, "How to Keep Your Job," 2000, p. 143)

(Mr. Cecilia is the president and CEO of EC Business Solutions and Career Center, a human resource consulting firm. He was president of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines or PMAP in 1999. His career books are available at popular bookstores. He can be reached at ec4u@edsamail.com.ph)

What I learned from the experts ...

From page 11

sual reminders everyday.

The sales expert from Florida dreams of visiting a hundred countries before he dies. He says he used to subscribe to 10 travel magazines. "Of course I couldn't go to all those places then but it helped motivate my life because I knew I couldn't travel for free." Now at age 61, he is four countries short of realizing his goal.

Know thyself

So now you know how to start: visualize and take the first step. But what if you're not quite sure about what you want? "It is tough trying to be what you want to be," says UK's customer service expert David Freemantle. "It forces you to know what you stand for and then to stand up for these convictions." He says you cannot be one thing one day and something else another day.

Freemantle advises to take a good look at yourself and ask what you are now and what you want to be. He says to look at traits that you might want to develop, change or improve on. For example if you are shy and a bit of a loner, ask yourself if you want to be outgoing and be socially accepted. If you already are an expert in your field, would you like to be respected for your expertise? Would you like to share your expertise?

Author of several books on leadership, Freemantle says knowing yourself requires a high degree of self-awareness about your talents and limitations, your feelings and emotions and how these relate to your principles, values, beliefs and aspirations. "When you know what you want to be, your own strengths and weaknesses become increasingly clear as you progress through life, because you are forever trying to enhance the former and limit the latter," he adds.

No quick fixes

It may be difficult to believe but leadership guru, Stephen Covey, actually crammed his way to a diploma. "I crammed my way to school and I thought I was clever and smart because I graduated with honors but as soon as I got into my graduate work I realized the foolishness of my errors," says the author of "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People." Covey remembers how he was humbled by the experience. Within three months, he tried to compensate and learn everything he missed all at once. "You can't fake it. You can't cram it. There is no quick fix. You have to pay a price," warns Covey."

If you want a million pesos on your savings account, don't bank on a lottery ticket. Winning is not an impossibility but the odds are a million to one. Don't allow a series of numbers to take control of your dreams when you can take the steering wheel yourself. Covey advises to take the route of personal greatness by embracing hard work and discipline. You've zoned in on what you want out of life, visualized it in your dreams every night and have taken the first step. The next step is to take the other foot forward. Then the next. And the next until you've reached the finish line. After all, no one else will do the walking for you.

New Year's resolutions ...

From page 11

Here are also some New Year's resolutions from members of the People at Work Community who answered the question: If you were to just have one goal for next year (or New Year's resolution) to improve your work and life, what do you think should this goal or New Year's resolution be?

I have done so many New Year's resolutions over the past years. But through all the experiences I have been through, I would like to improve my life by drastically mending my relationship with my family. There is one thing I have realized when my mommy died last May—that whatever relationship you had with your family, whether good or bad, you will miss them when they are gone. I don't want to wait for that time, losing a family member before showering them with love, appreciating them and showing that you really care and most of all, saying how you love them. I believe that if my relationship with my family is in its right perspective, this will greatly affect my work for the better. ***—Melody C. Torres, 34, IT Services Manager, Pepsi Cola Products Philippines Inc.***

The goal would be to plan the whole week every Sunday and adjust my meetings and tasks every night before I sleep. This will cause a tremendous improvement on my work and life since it will make me more efficient and effective in the use of my time. Plus, it will give me peace of mind and a stronger sense of purpose knowing that I have laid the work of the week/day. Unfortunately, even if aided with the latest gizmos, I was not able to do such this year. May this be my main goal for 2005. ***—Gerald S. Magtoto, 26, Head of Corporate Communications, Planning, Research and Development Department, Cocoplans***

My New Year's resolution at work is, of course, to do better at work. I will organize and plan ahead my various assignments and tasks so as not to be pressured with deadlines! I will take steps to improve my relationship with my coworkers because I'm always with them most of the time in a day and they are indispensable! I will see to it that my work will not only be good enough but excellent! And above all I will make God the center of both aspects of my life, personal and professional. ***—Paolo Angelo C Florenda***

Go for better health ***—Camil Chua, 50, Training consultant, FERN, Inc.***

It has been a habit for me to write down New Year's resolutions every year. Unfortunately, I always see myself derailed from what I have originally planned. Thus, for this year I intend to just set short-term goals and decide what I really want in every area of my personal and career life. My past experiences taught me that I really couldn't hit a target I cannot see. Just finish each day and be done with it, one step at a time. No need for big promises just a small one can produce. Big results later. ***—Roy Philipp Teh San Radoc, 25, HR Officer, RCBC Savings Bank***

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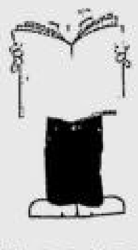

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The world of work according to Dana

By Dana MVC
Contributor

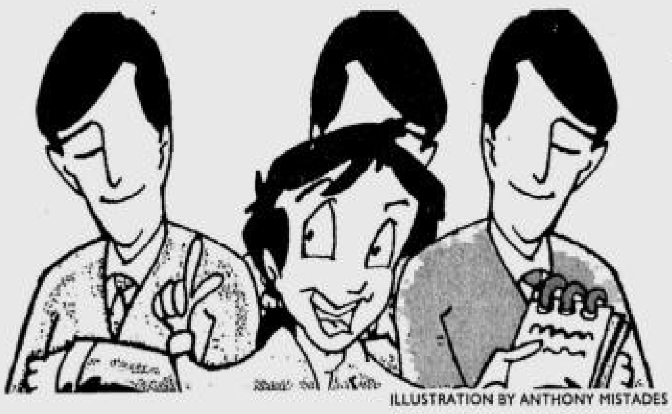

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

Chapter 5

Passion Central

With all the confusion in my zigzagging career, I never forget to be adventurous.

For instance, working in one company, I spent one weekend writing about the possibilities of alien life forms on earth—pretty unconventional pastime for those who spend it on facials and manicures. SETI or (Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence), wizardry and other metaphysical subjects fascinated me for a great while, and I spent a great deal of time collecting information about them, from cutting out newspaper clips to interviewing officers from the PAG-ASA bureau. The head of their "x-file" team thought I was a feature reporter from a reputable TV station. Hah! He was kind enough to accommodate my inquiries. I videotaped our interview, but still ended up with no concrete evidence that aliens left traces of their kind in the country. I was a little disappointed.

This was just one of my many writing escapades. Every free time I get, wherever I am, I would spend it on composing poems, stories and screenplays. However, with screenplays, I get slower. When I was in college, I could produce a 200-page piece in a week, but when I started working, it took me grueling months. At times, after a year of hard work, I'd change the entire story and redo everything from scratch. Then I realized how office work had been eating chunks of my precious writing time. But, I didn't mind. Alongside many things I do, I still kept on writing.

Then, how is it I was not in the big-time writing business or at least employed in one? At the back of my mind, that was what I was trying to do. But I was so open to life that I welcomed every distraction and career zigzag. The realization of my dreams lay dormant as I placed the security of employment first. I merely hoped that my superiors would discover that I could be depended on for a lot more sensible things. Such was a time of confusing career energy and practicality.

Then, I pursued my ambition. I went to where it would mostly likely be found. I took on a trainee job as a news writer for a TV network. It was a mix of tense but "cool" experience. Tense because a prestigious news editor would check my articles down to the last period. But, after a week, I felt like a loser not to be promised of compensation. So I left... just like that. My news writing career folded up because of money.

Before I could wallow in my disappointment, I got a call from a giant real estate company and my low spirits disappeared in an instant. My writing ambition dissolved, along with my other applications to media companies. At the new company, I was back to being an assistant to a boss again.

Chapter 6

Big Boss Pavilion

Classy, splendid Rolexes, Dunhills, BMW's and free meals—these characterized my new home.

At the new company, I was surrounded by magnanimous VPs or Big Bosses, the kind of which I've seen in "The Godfather" and "The Firm." Their elegance was a pleasurable sight everyday. You can easily choose whom to idolize and not mind about the unglamorous income you get every payday. It felt privileged to breathe in such an environment.

Work leveled up quite pleasantly too. My inputs were very welcomed, allowing me to freely share my writing and basic graphic skills. I endeavored to crack my creative shell as the VPs appreciated every effort I poured into it. This certainly was the best of times.

But not for long.

Foes came in many shapes and sizes and I became a childish "nut" defending myself all the time.

One manager would chide me on my use of a special executive chair, which was handed down to me by my VP boss. A senior staff would huddle with her friends to talk about anything they could possibly imagine of me. I wasn't however alone at being mocked at like this everyday. Some other new colleagues were showered with their spite too. A newfound friend in the office, who had been in the company for quite sometime, told me how things like these are like viruses that are impossible to extinguish. It was hard to believe. I had never encountered brutes like them. I soon learned what it takes to handle difficult work relationships. It was not easy.

Just as I was starting to build friends of my own, a senior engineer remarked to me one office morning, that I was "nothing more but a secretary." It certainly didn't sound like a compliment. I knew right away what he meant.

At work, I soon started to compose and design company newsletters by myself and spent most of my time doing marketing collaterals more than I did making coffee. This work-related happiness in my part caused the brutes to insult me every chance they could.

On my fifth month, I finally shared with my boss what I have been going through. Soon after that, the foes faded away. For the first time in my life, I felt overwhelmed by protection like I never had before. I never knew that important persons could stand up for me and that if I couldn't appreciate myself at home, some other people, even big people, truly could.

Perhaps, this was the best corporation I've been employed in. I stayed here the longest. The protection, security, and stability were incomparable to where I stood before and my colleagues couldn't agree me with more in saying that all these benefits were addicting.

But still ... something very important was missing.

'How can I protect ...

From page 11

But if employment is your only means of livelihood, you can still apply the same principle and succeed in your career. Think of employment as your business and apply the principles that led successful businessmen to the apex of their careers. That will help you enhance your security of tenure. I have redefined security of tenure as the ability to produce a variety of results that create value that customers are willing to pay for—overtime as you move from one team or department or company or career to another.

More specifically, here are some practical tips for global competitiveness and career success:

1. Focus on producing high-value results. Understand the very purpose of your job. Strive to always produce the results expected of you. If there are many results, focus first on the most important results that will create value that your organization has promised to deliver to its customers. If you don't know why they hired you, ask your boss!

2. Focus on what you and only you can do. If you really want to make a big difference, focus on doing what you and only you can do in your organization. This is difficult to find if you are just a face in the crowd. But, if you can do your work in a way that differentiates you from the rest, your boss will likely look for you if he wants a particular job done. Even if you are a janitor, you can be the best janitor there is. If you do, you will never run out of people asking for your brand of work. If you are unremarkable, no one will remember you. You're only statistics reported to Department of Labor and Employment as part of turnover.

3. Never rest on your laurels. Even after finishing a task, think of the next result you can show your boss. Spend every minute wisely at work—after all that has been bought from you by the company. Always look for the task that will produce the most important results in the eyes of your boss. Like it or not, the boss decides whether you get hired or fired or promoted.

4. Don't forget your career—plan for it. Set your eyes on higher paying jobs that you can also do in the company. Ask what it takes to get there—the knowledge, skills, and competencies required, the results expected from the position, and other relevant information. If you are a supervisor and you wish to be a manager, observe what the managers are doing or are expected to do. Don't let your boss plan your career—he doesn't care as much; he is busy thinking of his own career.

5. Find out what you lack to move to higher paying jobs. Compare your current skills level with that of incumbents in higher paying jobs. Acquire the knowledge and skills required through education, seminars, and other forms of continuous learning. When you stop learning, you stop...

6. Find opportunities to "try out" higher paying jobs. Volunteer to join task teams or offer to help your boss with some parts of his job that can be delegated to you. Be visible to the people who make career decisions. Join quality circles, quality improvement teams, and other opportunities to show your abilities. The most qualified candidates for promotion are those with experience in that job; so try out higher paying jobs even on temporary basis or without additional pay.

7. Create great impressions. Whenever given a task—at work or leisure—produce best results. Be the person who can be trusted with a variety of results at work, in organizing company outings, in facilitating sports events, etc. Even if the task were trivial, show that you give your best. Make sure you are seen, too—performance does not speak for itself.

8. Don't shrink from responsibilities. Throw away your job description. Do what your boss asks you to do, but prioritize tasks according to their value to the organization. Never neglect your job and never refuse a difficult task. I said difficult, not impossible. Create the reputation of being the go-to guy, or the professional, or the equalizer, or the problem solver. Bigger responsibilities come to those who show they know how to handle even smaller responsibilities.

9. Provide solutions. Be part of the solution, not the problem. At work, as in life, there will always be problems. Welcome them as opportunities to shine. Develop the knack for solving problems. The bigger the problem you solve, the greater your value to the organization becomes. If you can't

HOW/ 9

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Sunday PEOPLE at WORK

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Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Contributing Editor Regina Galang Reyes

The real king

By Bishop Precioso D. Cantillas, SDB, DD

IN AN ASSEMBLY of Filipinos abroad, I heard the lecturer comment in jest, "Where there are two Filipinos, there are at least three associations." Given in the context of building a community among Filipinos abroad, this remark elicited laughter, but also pointed sharply to the fact that overseas Pinoys want to be always the boss, the president or the "king"—being in control of everything and of everyone—thus creating rivalries that make unity almost impossible.

This tendency to be always on top and be the best is very much present in everyone in the workplace. While this strongly motivates a worker towards excellence in his job, it can also be an obstacle in building a genuine communion of persons in the workplace where there is caring for everyone and sharing not only of workloads but also of life experiences in faith or spiritual life. Building teamwork, forging synergy, introducing a corporate culture and other similar community building processes are essential in a workplace; it is one of the benchmarks of excellence in business and corporate entity. A strong community spirit meets one of the deeper needs of everyone in the workplace—finding a family, a home, in one's place of work.

In building a genuine community in the workplace, we may draw inspiration from the "three kings" in today's Gospel: humble and desirous of searching for the "newborn king"—the real king, Jesus Christ—and doing Him homage in our very place of work. When we acknowledge God as King and submit our will to Him, offer our work to Him as praise and worship, when we love and serve Him in every coworker especially those who are difficult to work with, unity becomes a reality. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)

REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

Ion of Gospel: Mt. 2: 1-12

"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage."

Stars in the workplace

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

I GOT a nice text message last Christmas that goes, "I wil luv d light 4 it shows me d way. Yet, I wil endur d darkness 4 it shows me d stars. May u b d stars dat lead others 2 God in glorius Betlehem." Despite the peculiar text spelling, its message rang simple and true, and it got me thinking about "stars" in the workplace.

One of those who exert great influence over others in the workplace is the "animator." Not necessarily a boss or occupying a position of authority, the animator is nonetheless a leader in his own right, counted upon to bring life to a gathering, to sway others' thoughts to a certain direction, to move people into action. In fact, the animator can be utilized by management to great advantage. Owing to his or her livewire personality, the animator has the potential to be a "star" in the workplace—but "star" in the showbiz sense of the word: admired, popular, in demand at celebrations, etc.

There is another kind of "star" in the workplace, and this is the "guide" who shines in the dark—when there is a crisis at work. You can count on his counsel when you are burdened with an unbearable personal or private problem; the whole staff can seek his guidance when their department, for instance, is bound for a head-on collision with management. Here the wisdom of this "star" steers you through the darkness until light comes—when a failproof solution to a situation is found. What's the difference between the two "stars"? The Animator-star can be a delight to behold, and indeed could draw attention to himself and himself alone, while the Guide-star takes others deeper into themselves, and helps them confront their situation by opening their eyes to the whole sky. (*E-mail the author at* teresa_de_manila@yahoo.com)

ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY MISTADES

'How can I protect my job?'

By Ernie O. Cecilia, FPM

"WHAT is the best protection against loss of job these days?" I have been working as production supervisor for five years now in the Philippine site of a global company with head offices in the USA. I also read in the papers that this year there were several global companies that have closed its manufacturing operations in the Philippines.

I am beginning to suspect that "global or regional sourcing" has made it possible for large multinationals to manufacture their products elsewhere and "dump" them in our country, resulting in loss of jobs for many employees. What is our best protection against this looming possibility? Whatever happened to security of tenure? Can you please give me some specific tips to be more competitive, if not successful, as an employee? I have no capital or entrepreneurial skill, so please skip the tips about having my own business.

Employee Forever

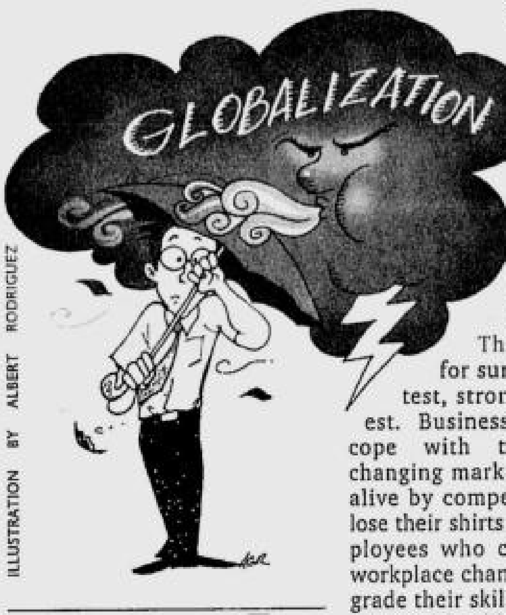


ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

ASK YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR

I'm glad that you are updated on business and employment trends. I'm glad that your observations seem correct. Ten years ago, I wrote about emerging trends in the workplace—including globalization and its effects on work and leisure, its attendant problems and opportunities. I also wrote about the changing concept of security of tenure in the future. That future is upon us now—and I don't know if I should be glad about it.

Globalization offers no safety nets to employees. It also offers no guarantees to businessmen. This is the time for survival of the fittest, strongest, or prettiest. Businessmen who can't cope with the constantly changing market will be eaten alive by competition and will lose their shirts and pants. Employees who can't cope with workplace changes and not upgrade their skills will lose their jobs and livelihood.

Learning craze

Two issues ago in this column, I wrote about lifelong learning as a worldwide "craze" gaining popularity among organizations and individuals to avoid "social exclusion due to ignorance." This is one way to enhance one's global competitiveness. But, as fast as your cellular phones become obsolete, knowledge and skills required to succeed in the workplace also change. You often upgrade your cell phone to be "in." You should also upgrade your workplace skills and knowledge—or you're "out."

Did you ever notice that two years after you left school, your college education has very little or no bearing at all to your career? Schooling, especially one that is not constantly upgraded, is not a guarantee for workplace success these days. So, what is?

Education or learning is a good tool—especially lifelong learning. But what determines whether you will continue to have a job is not your education but your ability to produce results that create value that the customers are willing to pay for. (I also wrote about this 10 years ago—and I'm getting old saying that over and over.)

Business mentality

The Philippines, like the rest of the world, is filled with living testimonies to this truism. We all have seen business icons who started with practically nothing—in education, capital, physical resources, or natural advantages—and yet ended up more successful than their wiser, richer or better-endowed counterparts. Of course, many ceased to work for their bosses and became their own masters.

HOW/P.10

New Year's resolutions for people at work

By Regina Galang Reyes

IF you want to improve your work and life, then you've got to change something in your work and life. The start of a New Year is the best time to start thinking of what to change, hence, the popularity of New Year's resolutions.

Here's a list of 10 New Year's resolutions that people at work may want to consider.

1. **Take care of your body.** A well-known author once wrote that your body is the only instrument you have to achieve your goals. So, if you don't take care of it, you will not be able to do the things you want to do in life. Take time off for exercise, preparing healthy food and medical checkups. Quit smoking, drinking and all the other vices that take their toll on your health.

2. **Get out of the debt trap.** An employee who retired after 20 years of work found that her retirement pay was just enough to pay all her credit card bills. Employees tend to maintain a certain lifestyle that may be beyond their means. Eating out and buying clothes raise expenses way beyond the usual take-home pay. While you are still earning a regular income, aim to pay all your bills within a certain time frame and stop incurring more.

3. **Take the clutter out of your house.** People really don't need much to live a happy, comfortable life. There are many things in your house that you don't use but others need. Simplify your surroundings and in so doing, you'll find that you get to simplify your life, too.

4. **Learn something new each day.** The workplace is constantly changing and people need to acquire new skills to be able to perform their jobs. If you have stopped learning at work, you may soon find yourself retrenched, reorganized or right-sized—in other words, jobless. Updating your knowledge and skills enable you to be more competitive in the job market.

5. **Spend more time with your loved ones.** While Filipinos are generally family-oriented, sometimes the pressures and obligations of work pull away time that you can spend for your family and friends. At the end of the day, however, jobs come and go but family ties remain. And if your relationship with your family has not been nurtured over the years, your retirement years could become very lonely indeed.

6. **Help others.** In these times of disasters, helping others is something that is most needed. Whatever your situation, you can always help others by giving some amount of money, time or talent.

7. **Shine, not whine.** When caught in an unpleasant situation, you can always choose: do the best you can to get out of or resolve the problem and come out all the better for it or complain until you sink in the quagmire of the problem. The difference is in one letter; the difference is in one choice.

8. **Do things a little bit better everyday.** There is always room for improvement. If you are not yet up to par at work, improve your work a bit each day until you reach or even exceed your performance standards. Though excellence is a mountain that may seem too high to climb, getting there can be achieved with one step at a time.

9. **Leave judging to the Almighty.** Gossip flourishes because people make judgments about other people. When you leave the judging to the Lord, then, there will be no room for spite at work.

10. **Pursue your passion.** If what you are presently doing does not bring sparkle to your eyes or a lift to your step, then, you are not pursuing your passion or work that you were meant to do. Discover your passion—it may be another career worth pursuing or a new hobby that can invigorate your work life.

NEWYEARS/P.9

What I learned from the experts

By Candy G. Villanueva
Contributor

IT'S THE TIME of the year to clean out closets of sequined tops you only wore once in your life. It's also that time of the year to clear your mind of negative thoughts and debilitating beliefs. For some, the New Year is the time for resolutions that conveniently get forgotten after only a few months have rolled in. For me, the advent of 2005 has swept me into an introspective moment. This is the time to toast the good, the bad and the many people I have met along the way. I think one of the best things of being a writer is the opportunity of meeting people from all walks of life and living through their thoughts and experiences.

From the Filipina who was the first Asian to perform in the Kirov Ballet, to the lawyer who attempts to be the first Filipino to plant the Philippine flag on Everest's Peak, to My Trabaho's timid fresh commerce graduate who conquered his first mountain by landing a job, I can only hope that by talking to them, at least a fraction of their greatness would rub off on me. Each of these individuals have achieved their ultimate goals, are on their way to attaining them or continuously seeking out new ones. What are their secrets? Last year, I met four experts who shared some light on how to capture the somewhat elusive dream. Most of their ways are the things that most of you probably already know, but there's nothing like hearing it from the expert's mouth.

A page at a time

Every writer's dream is to publish a book. I know it is one of my ultimate goals. But how do I start a book? Do I look for a publisher? Should I join a writer's workshop? Must I look for a mentor? John Maxwell, author of more than 30 bestsellers and counting, has a simple answer. "I simply write one page at a time," the renowned author answers with a twinkle in his eye. He says he writes a word at a time and a page a day. Before he knows it, in just a few weeks or months, he's got over a hundred pages worth of thoughts. "Then I put something in the front, and something in the back, and then I got myself a book!"

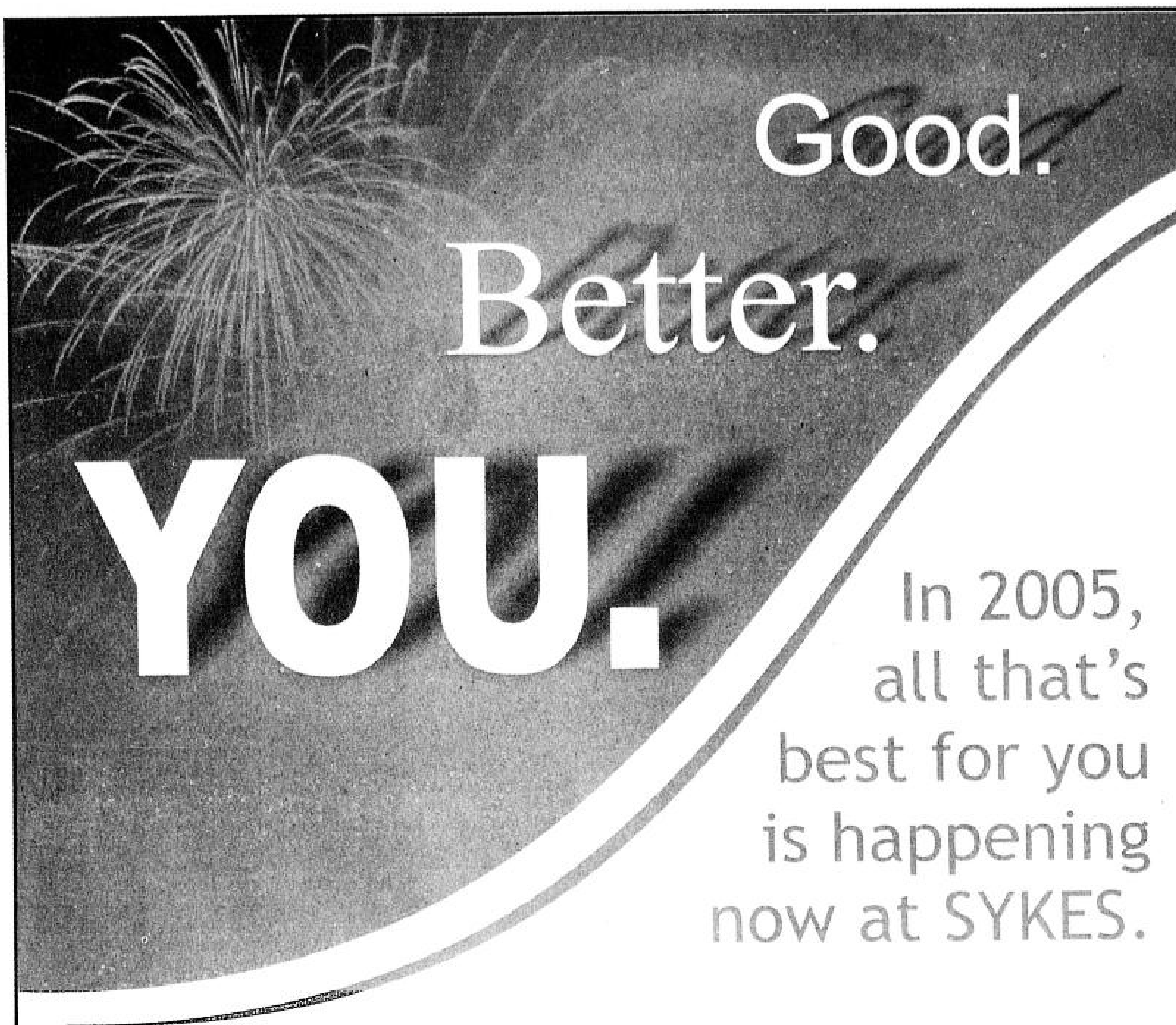
The author of the best seller "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership" says he learns everyday and has several ideas just begging to be let out. Interestingly enough, Maxwell writes longhand. In fact, he confesses he doesn't even know how to operate a computer. Yet he spews out pages and pages of handwritten manuscripts faster than a laser printer. Before he knows it, he's completed a book waiting to be published. What Maxwell is saying is that there really is no secret into getting one's dream started. The thing to do is just start. Many people have grand dreams but often, they always remain what they are—dreams. One starts to realize a dream by simply taking the first step. The next step is to stick to this decision and work on it everyday. "The bookends of success are starting and finishing. Decisions help us start. Discipline helps us finish."

Have you ever dreamed how it would be like to feel the wind on your face on top of the Eiffel Tower? Or have you ever wondered how the sun would feel on your back while chasing a tiger in an African safari? If you have, you already have taken the first step to buying yourself a ticket to your dream vacation. The first step is called imagery. Mike Malaghan, former door-to-door encyclopedia salesman turned owner of sales empires in four continents, believes in visualizing the dream to realize it.

Visualize it

Feed the dream, he says, by seeing it in your head like it is already yours. Involve all senses if possible. If you dream of the new BMW 1 series for example, go to the car dealer and ask for a test drive. Experience the steering wheel turning under your hands and smell the newness of the interior. Remind yourself of these sensations as a motivation. It would also help to ask for brochures and post them where you can see these vi-

THINGS/P.9



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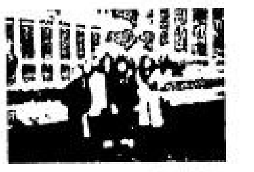

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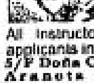
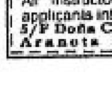

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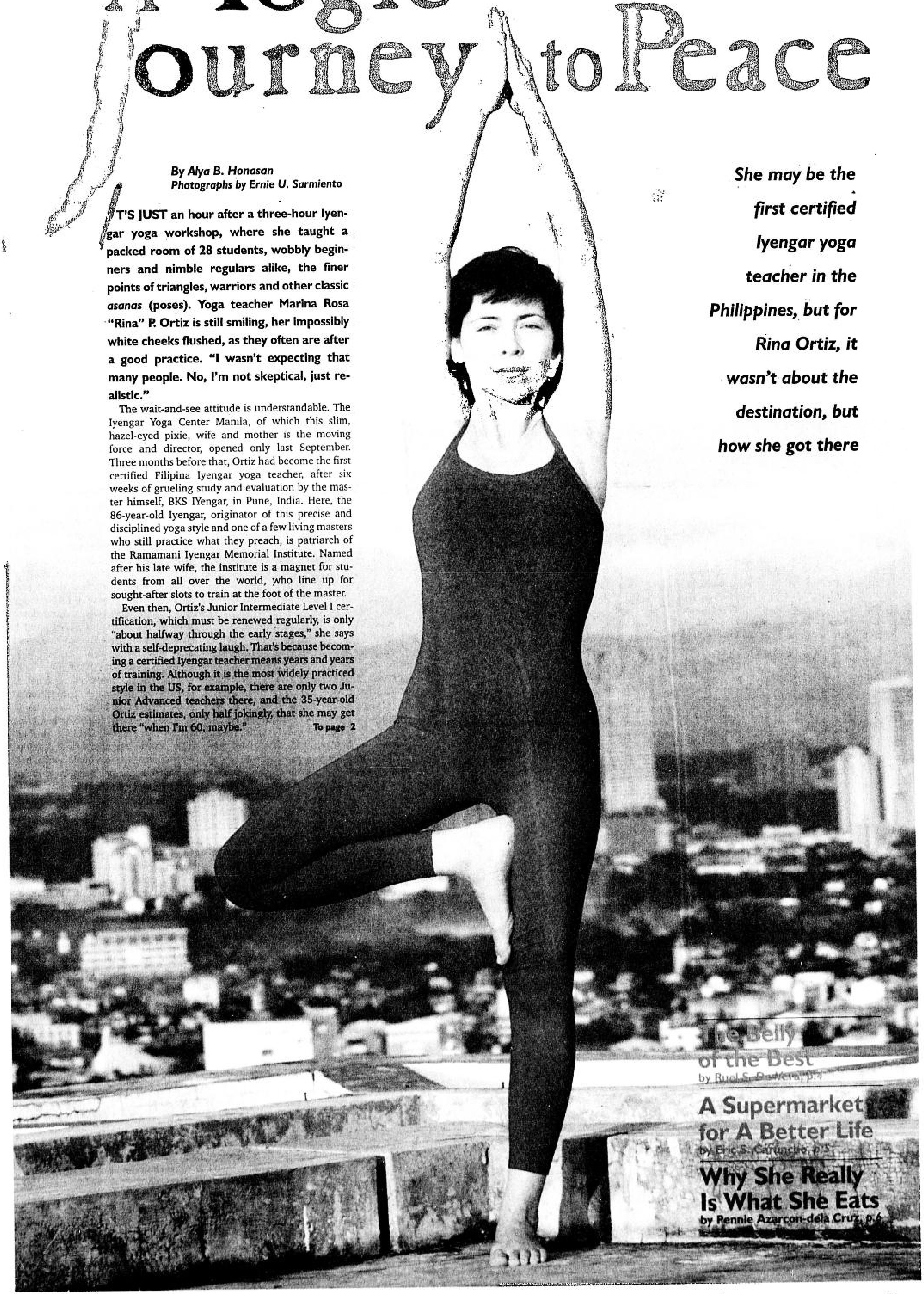
Rina Ortiz
A Yogic Journey to Peace



She may be the first certified Iyengar yoga teacher in the Philippines, but for Rina Ortiz, it wasn't about the destination, but how she got there

By Alya B. Honasan
Photographs by Ernie U. Sarmiento

IT'S JUST an hour after a three-hour Iyengar yoga workshop, where she taught a packed room of 28 students, wobbly beginners and nimble regulars alike, the finer points of triangles, warriors and other classic *asanas* (poses). Yoga teacher Marina Rosa "Rina" P. Ortiz is still smiling, her impossibly white cheeks flushed, as they often are after a good practice. "I wasn't expecting that many people. No, I'm not skeptical, just realistic."

The wait-and-see attitude is understandable. The Iyengar Yoga Center Manila, of which this slim, hazel-eyed pixie, wife and mother is the moving force and director, opened only last September. Three months before that, Ortiz had become the first certified Filipina Iyengar yoga teacher, after six weeks of grueling study and evaluation by the master himself, BKS IYengar, in Pune, India. Here, the 86-year-old Iyengar, originator of this precise and disciplined yoga style and one of a few living masters who still practice what they preach, is patriarch of the Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Institute. Named after his late wife, the institute is a magnet for students from all over the world, who line up for sought-after slots to train at the foot of the master.

Even then, Ortiz's Junior Intermediate Level I certification, which must be renewed regularly, is only "about halfway through the early stages," she says with a self-deprecating laugh. That's because becoming a certified Iyengar teacher means years and years of training. Although it is the most widely practiced style in the US, for example, there are only two Junior Advanced teachers there, and the 35-year-old Ortiz estimates, only half jokingly, that she may get there "when I'm 60, maybe."

To page 2

The Belly of the Best
by Ruel S. De Vera, p.4

A Supermarket for A Better Life
by Eric S. Caruncho, p.5

Why She Really Is What She Eats
by Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz, p.6

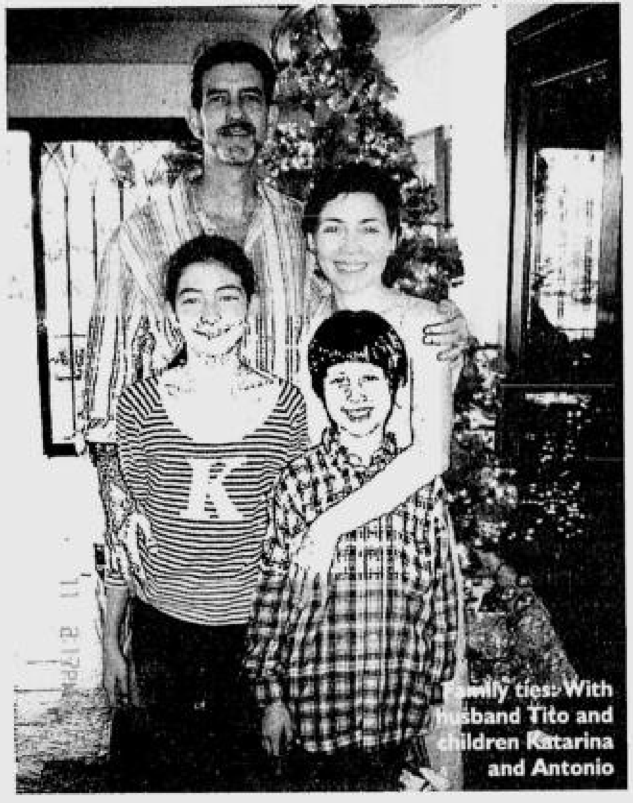
Rina...from page 1

Which also explains why Ortiz doesn't really dwell on her being a pioneer of sorts. "My main concern at the beginning was, would people understand it? It's a little slower than other forms of yoga, more technical, and requires a little more concentration." Unlike the more popular ashtanga style, where teachers lead students through a continuous, vigorous sequence of *asanas*, Iyengar teachers emphasize form and alignment, asking students to hold a pose for about a minute. "Many teachers of Iyengar yoga also tend to take themselves a little too seriously. I wanted to present it in such a way that it's still fun. Learning becomes easier that way. Be serious in your commitment, but have fun."

Den mother

It helps that, although she's a stickler about doing things right, she's not such a "control freak" about running the school, Ortiz says. "I've learned to give people some autonomy." Indeed, to students and teacher trainees, Ortiz is more of the chit-chatting, concerned den mother, ready with personalized advice or a cup of homemade tea from her thermos bottle. When she means business during a class, however, she's barking out hair-splitting instructions ("Suck your anal mouth to your brain!"), whacking lazy muscles into place, or pushing that headstand just a few minutes longer. "If you come and you just want a workout, fine. If it develops into something greater, if it's time for you to see that, then that would be better."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Family ties: With husband Tito and children Katarina and Antonio

Discipline and acceptance: Ortiz does a rooftop *Garudasana* (Eagle Pose)

Ortiz is the first to admit that she was not always this non-judgmental. Born and raised in Manila, Ortiz grew up an insecure tomboy with three brothers, a distant mother, and a big self-esteem problem. "I didn't have too many friends, so I guess I came on strong as a defense mechanism." It was a difficult childhood, but Ortiz does not blame her parents, now separated, for her own soul-searching later in life.

In school she remembers being something of a party girl—"though not a wild one"—perpetually dressing in black, and finding solace in sports. "I was always athletic. I was once ranked no. 9 in tennis. I wanted to amount to something, but I had to do something physical, because I wasn't interested in studying and reading books."

In 1988, to get her away from a bad relationship, Ortiz's parents bundled her off to study hotel and restaurant management in Les Roches in Bluche, Switzerland. Ortiz was glad to go, and did not miss anything about her life in Manila. "I was very happy there, because I met many people with whom I could be myself. It was difficult in the sense that you're alone, you learn to do your own laundry, you share a flat with five other people, and if you missed the single bus it was a five-kilometer walk into town. I never thought I could survive on my own, but I did, quite well. And you never think of the bad things that can happen to you when you're young." Ortiz remembers throwing up from a hot air balloon after she hitched a ride once—only to realize she was afraid of heights!

After graduation, she worked as a front desk clerk in a Geneva hotel, honing her French, until her money and working permit both ran out. She ruefully came home, hoping to make enough money to move elsewhere, and in the meantime managing the Spanish restaurant La Tasca with chef Ed Quimson. It was at this time that she was set up on a blind date with banker Tito Ortiz, a confirmed bachelor 12 years her senior. "We both knew by the second date," Ortiz recalls. "He was very kind, a very live-and-let-live sort of guy. I guess I needed a stabilizing factor." They met in 1992, and were married a little over a year later; she was 23 and he was 35. Today, they're parents to 10-year-old Katarina and seven-year-old Antonio. "He's very supportive," Ortiz says of her husband, now CEO and chairman of Union Bank. "We both like to think outside the box."

Depression

It was after Antonio's birth, however, that Ortiz fell into a depression that would eventually lead her to yoga. Postpartum blues, more family conflicts and years of baggage compounded things for this veritable child married to a very successful man. "I tried so hard to be accepted by everyone. I wanted to be the best woman, the best mother, the best wife—and all this was self-induced! Nobody ever told me I had to do it. I created my own problems. People would tell me, 'Wow, Rina, you're so lucky, your husband adores you and your children are healthy'—and I didn't know why I'd feel like socking them!"

Afraid to see a psychiatrist because of a relative's bad experience with medication, Ortiz, on her own, had to confront the fact that not even her family was enough for her at the time. "And there really should not be anybody or anything else that will be 'enough' for you. You have to be enough for yourself, fix the inside first. Luckily, Tito and I can tell each other the most difficult things. We know it's coming from a good place, so we're both open."

The anxiety gave her aggravated digestive and gall bladder problems, until one day, she collapsed in a New York department store with her then seven-year-old daughter. "When I came to I was on a stretcher, and Kathy looked petrified. She thought I had died! I realized then how you never know when you're going to go." Ortiz had been going to Mass every day, reading books, and attending prayer meetings, but somehow she didn't find what she was looking for in them. "Then one day, I read that verse in the Bible: God helps those who help themselves. If that's what He said, then there must be something else.I could do. And it was more than just staying within my comfort zones."

Plunging into the study of eastern philosophy and yoga, she found that it was "the same message disseminated in a different way. It's all about loving your neighbor as you love yourself, and if you love yourself, you love God. So what are we here for, just to write checks to charity? I don't think so."

Baptism of fire

Seven years ago, Ortiz went to her first yoga class and proceeded to try all kinds, from the classic to the downright strange. Then, after two years, she joined a New York workshop with renowned teacher Dona Holleman, who was trained in the Iyengar style. It was a baptism of fire, but Ortiz has never looked back since. With no Iyengar teachers in Manila, she would attend other classes, but later realized "they were really different apples" and opted to practice on her own. She eventually hooked up with another Iyengar practitioner and teacher in Manila, businesswoman Carol Dominguez, and began teaching informally a few years ago. Regular trips to study with her own long-time teacher, Faeq Biria, in France also got Ortiz dreaming of making it to Pune. Last June, BKS Iyengar himself gave her his blessing to officially bring the practice to Manila and carry his name in a school.

"I didn't know if I would find any answers in yoga at the beginning," Ortiz says now. "I had been searching so long, and got depressed because I couldn't find it." Yoga gave her discipline and insight, Ortiz explains. "But it has also taught me acceptance, accepting myself and getting comfortable in my skin. There are some poses I can and cannot do because of the way my body is, and I have to go about it slowly. It's a marathon, not a race. And I learned I can apply that to other aspects of my life, as well."

Not just a fad

Ortiz doesn't mind being labeled "weird" by her more conventional friends, either. She still occasionally ends up in society pages for her low-key but unpredictable fashion style, but she'd rather remember whose opinion really counts. "For my real friends, being weird means not being myself. So okay *lang* what others say, really."

As for Pinoys who think yoga will eventually go the way of step aerobics or ballroom dancing, Ortiz is again pragmatic. "I don't think it's a fad. It's been here for 3,000 years. It's a fad for as long as you're a faddish kind of person and you don't know who you are. But if you're truly interested in finding out, and you're willing to not be given an answer right away, then you will stay. And inevitably, I dare say you will find something."

One of the best things about Iyengar yoga, Ortiz says, is that it does not impose any mode of spirituality at the onset, as Iyengar espouses working on your body first before getting into the soul. "Nothing is forced upon you to swallow. You come to the realization on your own, and it's your kind of spirituality, in your own time. It's not about tomorrow. You're just waiting to see what today will bring, because that's all we really have."

That's why, for Rina Ortiz and the growing number of Iyengar yoga practitioners, this is truly a workout of the body, mind and soul. "When all three combine, you can be truly just yourself. And that's peace."

The Iyengar Yoga Center Manila is at the 21st Floor, LKG Building, 6801 Ayala Ave., Makati. For inquiries on classes, call or text 0917-8450918 or 0917-5278861

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Managing Editor	**Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz**
Associate Editor	**Ruel S. De Vera**
Staff Writer	**Eric S. Caruncho**
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Advertising & Sales Manager	**Kenny Nuyda**

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DISTINCTLY SWEDISH Mandarin Oriental, Manila kicks off the New Year with a stimulating display of delightful and gustatory Swedish fare and jazz music by the Sliding Hammers Jazz Group from Jan. 10 to 15 at the Captain's Bar. The culinary event will offer lunch and dinner buffets. For details, call 750-8888 ext. 2417/2418. *For more of This Week, see page 7*

Empanada Royale

I still miss my mother. One person less
to raise my voice or scoff at, trade memory
of recipes with. Last Sunday I found,
after all these years, hen's eggs without
shells and whites, forced out of insides
by human hands. And my screen went cable
or satellite or whatever linked dear images
of the past to feed us again in our homes.
Mom's native chicken stew, with those yolk-yellow
globules of gradated sizes surfacing in the soup.
From the wet market I deja vu right through
to my kitchen, announce to family that this
was what I had as special liquid cache
of wonders on Sundays in the Fifties.
"Chickens these days are manufactured, plump
indeed and rather fatty, but of little taste.
Try this native, or what they now call organic,
free-range." The kids agree on delicacy,
adore with active spoons the hierarchy of eggs.
Yet it wasn't the thick soup in her old bowl
where I landed my basketball one day,
orange like the glutinous surface of *kare-kare*
(oxtail stew colored by annatto, cum powdered
peanuts, rice grains and banana hearts).
All those countless lessons (on the phone)
on *adobo* traditional, with coco milk, or nouveau.
The distinction between *pinakbet* and *bulanglang*.
And a year or two before she talked the toque
and walked the wok, she said she liked the
Empanada Royale sold in a stand at the mall.
I said yes, I liked them too, and would send
her a dozen next time I picked up a few.

Alfred A. Yuson

Everything from A to zed awaits you... only at the SMART Buddy Pre-paid Zone

Hello there! Techie Steve at your service once again with this week's dose of SMART Buddy content and downloadable stuff that both you and your celfone will absolutely love. And this week, we've got one amazing deal with wheels just for you! Get this: by simply using any SMART zed service from your SMART Buddy phone, you automatically earn one raffle entry!

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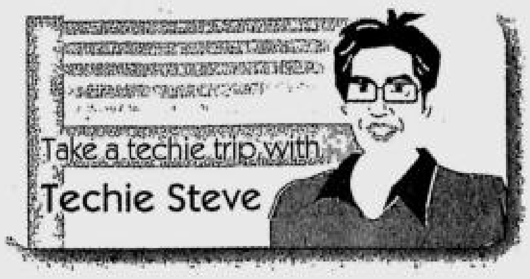
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Buddy Finder

Hotlists

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Horoscopes

Last but not least for this week's dose of Buddyzone is the SMART Buddy zed Horoscopes. It gives you lots of different ways to start your day so there's always something exciting to look forward to. **Just key in HOROSCOPE and send to 288 for a list of different kinds of horoscopes you can choose from. Let's say you choose the Love Horoscope—send LH ON <your zodiac sign> to 288** and see what's written in the stars for you through your celfone, everyday!

There's no doubt you'll find everything from 'A' to zed with SMART Buddy. Join me again for our next foray into the amazing world of Buddyzone. Till then, stay zoned and keep it real!

Texting You Forget Me Nots

How often have you missed an appointment that you completely forgot about, or failed to greet your best friend on his birthday causing him or her to sulk like a child for days? Or perhaps you've been stood up one time too many simply because your date overlooked the fact that you were supposed to meet at some trendy café, leaving you swilling away all by yourself like a hopeless caffeine fiend.

Well the good news is, embarrassing moments like these can now be avoided. And you don't need to take any drastic measures to remind your friends or even yourself of things that need to get accomplished. All you really need is your trusty SMART celfone and you're set! It's yet another brilliant idea from the leader in wireless innovation. Let SMART Text Reminder organize things for you and your friends.

There are two ways of using this service. One way is to use it to remind your friends of something. All you have to do is set your phone for the date and time you want your friend to receive the text reminder by typing REMIND <date>/<time> <message> and send to 210 + your friend's celfone number. So even if what he needs to be reminded about is still a few days away, you can relax and let Text Reminder do the reminding for you. And when that time and day comes, your friend will receive a text message with your reminder for him to read and remember!

The other way to use it is to let it remind yourself of something that you know you'll forget to do. Just key in REMIND <date>/<time> <message> and send to 210. You too will receive a text message with your own reminder at the time and day you set it for.

So even if you're as forgetful as an elephant, you can now rest assured that SMART Text Reminder will keep your life organized. And you don't have to forget a single thing again. Ever.

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SMART Simply Amazing!

Trailblazers

By Eric S. Caruncho

A Supermarket for A Better Life

It took his son's illness for Romy Sia to realize how riddled with chemicals our food is. Today, his hugely successful store chain Healthy Options is offering consumers just that

WHAT'S for dinner?

How about a healthy serving of sodium benzoate smothered in glycol alginate, with a little potassium sorbate on the side, and some calcium disodium EDTA for dessert?

Most people don't realize it, but the typical urban diet of highly-processed convenience foods is a chemical stew of preservatives, emulsifiers, artifical sweeteners and coloring agents and other additives. That plump, juicy chicken leg has been pumped full of hormones and antibiotics. Even that "healthy" green salad could be full of pesticide residue if the veggies haven't been scrupulously washed. Not to mention the usual artery-clogging amount of saturated fat that provides most of the calories in your typical meal.

It's no wonder people are dropping like flies. But until they get that wake-up call, in the form of a stroke, diabetes, or some other life-threatening illness, people will eat anything as long as it tastes good and the price is right.

Ten years ago, Romy Sia was no different. Then in his mid-thirties, the finance executive had just returned to the Philippines with his wife and two small children after eight years in England where he worked for Campbell's Soup. He had begun working for the finance department of ABS-CBN when his two-year-old son suddenly developed rashes and an alarming swelling of the face.

"Our doctor told us it was a food allergy, and until we found out what it was he was allergic to, he told us not to give him anything which might have food additives," Sia recalls. "But when we went to the supermarket and started reading the labels, we found out that almost everything had food additives."

Changed thinking

By a process of elimination, Sia eventually discovered that his son was allergic to corn and corn by-products, which included the ubiquitous corn syrup used to sweeten everything from candy to soft drinks to juices. By that time, his whole way of thinking had changed.

"Although I didn't smoke or drink, I wasn't exactly a health fanatic," he says. "I'm not a vegetarian. I didn't take any vitamin supplements. But the more I researched into it, the more I realized how beneficial and healthy organic and additive-free food could be. And I started thinking: Why can't we get these kinds of foods in the Philippines? Who wouldn't want something that was wholesome and good for their health?"

That question became the acorn from which Healthy Options, now a healthy business with 10 branches and more than a hundred employees, grew. Sia opened the first Healthy Options branch in the Shangri-la Mall in 1995. The basic concept was of a high-end, upmarket grocery for organic, additive-free food products.

"Amazingly, I discovered that there were a lot of people looking for these products," he says.

In fact, the timing couldn't have been better. By the mid-1990s the baby-boomers were now hitting their forties and fifties, and were now old enough to worry about their health and prosperous enough to do something about it. The health-and-fitness zeitgeist had fuelled the boom in gyms and spas, exercise equipment and sporting goods, fitness apparel and health-oriented restaurants and juice bars. Why not a supermarket?

"People who are health-conscious and who have undergone a life-changing experience read a lot," says Sia. "People with diabetes, cancer and hypertension read more than their doctors do, and in the age of the Internet, they research. I was very lucky to meet these people; they were the ones encouraging me."

In the early years, Healthy Options was very much driven by its base of well-informed and well-heeled customers. They wanted more than just healthy, additive-free food: they wanted vitamin supplements, herbal medicines, sports nutrition and performance-enhancing products. Some people wanted homeopathic remedies. Others were drawn by the new buzz around age-old products like guarana, or gingko biloba, or cholesterol-reducing green tea. Some wanted organic shampoos and skin creams.

Evolving shop

As the customers came in, the store changed to meet their demands, until it evolved into the one-stop shop it is today.

"We were lucky," says Sia. "We were in the black after the first year, then we got ambitious and started opening new stores, and we never looked back."

When, after two years, Sia and his partners opened their third branch and began looking for office and warehouse space—they had been operating out of their homes until then—he realized it was time to quit his day job and work at the business full-time. And while similar businesses have come and gone, Healthy Options has thrived.

Sia attributes this to one thing: "I feel really passionate about the business. I don't look at it from the standpoint of making profit. I see that these products are good and will help a lot of people. When I hear about a new product, for instance, organic wines, I get really excited."

Although Healthy Options caters to a small market niche, it is a highly resilient, apparently recession-proof one.

"In 1997 during the Asian financial crisis, when the dollar jumped from P26 to P35, we had to adjust our prices, but our business wasn't affected at all. I realized that people will always put their health first: they may travel less, or buy fewer luxuries, but they will not stop buying what is keeping them healthy or alive."

Other plans

In a way, it's ironic that Sia is running a thriving retail business. He grew up in Quiapo, where his parents ran a textile store on Villalobos St. near Quiapo church. They were grooming him to take over the business, but he had other plans.

"I didn't want to go into retail," he recalls. "I wanted to travel. I wanted to be an executive. That's why I took up marketing at UST."

He got his wish, but somehow his road led back to retail, although the typical Healthy Options branch is worlds away from Villalobos St. It is usually situated in a high-end mall (to date, there are eight branches in Manila and one each in Pampanga and Cebu). The staff are also not your typical catatonic sales drones.

"They're not so much salespeople as health advisers, or wellness consultants," says Sia. "That's why all our em-

To page 5

RAFFY LERMA

To Your Health

The Belly of the Best

By Ruel S. De Vera

Fabulously flexible Lala Ilao-Dinglasan believes that the exotic and effective exercise that is belly dancing is here to stay

WHEN Lala Ilao-Dinglasan commences to demonstrate exactly what belly dancing is all about, she basically becomes superhuman. Once the music starts, the 28-year-old dance instructor can swivel those hips and whirl that waist at a speed that has got to be beyond the capacity of ordinary mortals. Once she gets started, Lala is a nimble, rhythmic human whirlwind. It's like she has springs, rubber bands and a quartet of double A batteries hidden in her midsection.

But then again, Lala isn't your usual fitness pro. A much sought-after instructor at several gyms including her own, Lala sparked the Filipinos' interest in the exotic art of belly dancing as a form of exercise. "It's low-impact, very sensual and very exotic for Filipinos compared to other exercises," she says.

Playful and provocative

It may not seem like such a good fit at first; conservative, Catholic Filipinos and the exotic, seductive dance, with its mysterious veils, undulating moves and bared, vibrating midriff. Yet belly dancing has become a hot fitness trend in the country, showing that our people do have the, uh, stomach for it.

Lala leads the charge and says the appeal crosses over all sorts of brackets. Indeed, she has students from 14 to 75 (yes, you read that right, Lala has a 75-year-old belly dancing student). "The students, particularly those who have a background in dance, find it challenging. They find it fun." There is a certain playful, provocative aspect to belly dancing that is also a plus, she adds.

That has a lot to do with belly dancing's origins. Lala notes that belly dancing started in the ancient Middle East as something mothers taught their daughters to make childbirth easier. It later evolved into a traditional sensual dance and crossed borders as a seductive art. Recently, it caught on in the US as aerobic exercise. Now, it's here and Lala becomes the perfect preacher for this art's benefits. Having given birth to her first child recently, Lala had gained 30 pounds but promptly lost them and five more.

The athletically inclined Lala had always enjoyed dancing and gymnastics since childhood. The youngest of three children, Lala was part of the Dance Club at St. Scholastica's Academy in Marikina. While taking up Broadcast Communication at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Lala energized sports lovers as a member of the UP Pep Squad. She graduated in 1998.

Lala's face would probably be familiar to eagle-eyed basketball fans as she served as a courtside reporter for the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association, among other hosting gigs. But it's her career as a fitness professional that got her to this pivotal point.

Passionate about dance and cheer dancing, Lala coached and choreographed for schools and companies, regularly visiting the United States to hone her skills. Once, while training at a Burbank, California studio that featured belly dancing classes under famous belly dancing teachers Veena and Neena Bidasha, the idea caught Lala's fancy.

Encouraging response

After working with the two, Lala thought about bringing bellydancing to the Philippines as a form of exercise. Lala had begun teaching Pep Dancing, which is basically cheer dancing as exercise, at Gold's Gym Glorietta in 2002. Lala began teaching belly dancing at the now-defunct Greenhills studio called Fitness Escape ("I was pregnant then so I had to switch to something low-impact"), before moving that class to Gold's as well. The response was surprisingly very encouraging.

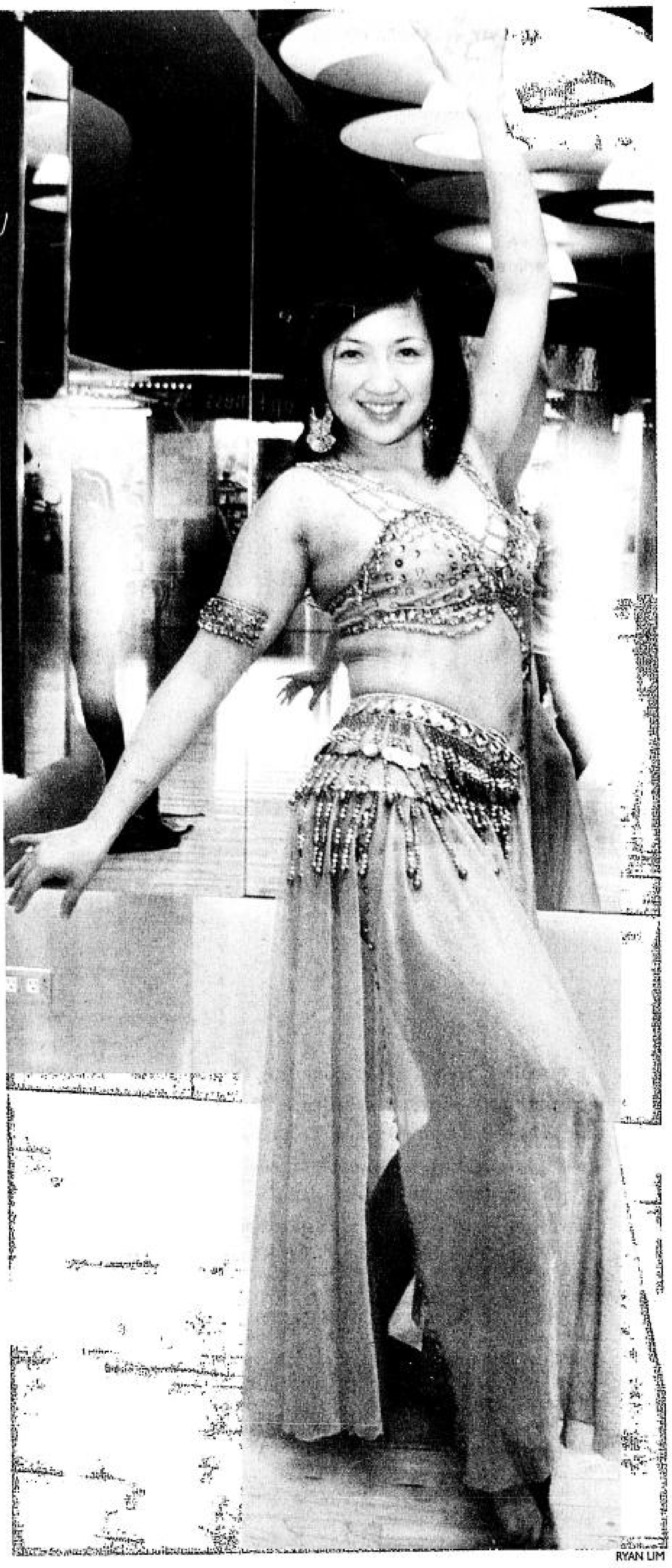
"When it comes to fitness, people tend to be very adventurous," she says. "People like me find stuff like using the treadmill very boring and repetitive. But if I do belly dancing, jazz or hip-hop, it gives me fulfillment because I learn the dance, I learn the steps but I'm also losing weight." Time swings by quickly when people are memorizing the steps and having fun. "It's very popular because you use a lot of accessories. The hip scarves are used for resistance and for a teacher to detect if you're doing the right movement," says Lala.

In 2004, Lala, then six months pregnant, returned to the US to earn her certification for advance belly dancing in Sherman Oaks, California, from Anisa, the Bidashas' teacher. She currently teaches two classes at Gold's in Makati and another at Red Corner Libis, and holds court four times a week at Baila! Universal Dance and Fitness Studio, which she co-owns in Alabang.

Like Pilates and yoga, fitness trends that develop well-toned legs, belly dancing is something that Lala believes is here to stay. "It's going to plateau but it's here to stay because it doesn't stop there. It grows. There are lots of steps you can play around with." Lala notes that big American pop acts like Beyonce, Shakira and Alicia Keys have been employing belly dancing steps in their music videos. "You can mix steps and play around with the execution."

Extraordinary exercise

Married to businessman and former De La Salle cager Rafa Dinglasan, doting first time mom Lala proudly displays photos of her daughter, Ma. Eneka Julia. In her spare time, Lala, naturally, loves sports: basketball, tennis, wall climbing and flag football. Away from athletic efforts, she enjoys watching movies ("Bruce Almighty" ranks among her many favorites) and TV. She still loves grooving to the infectious beat of '90s-era Janet Jackson (Think the dancer-friendly "Rhythm Nation").



RYAN LIM

As to new fitness trends, she speaks highly of a new hybrid being taught by one of her Baila! partners: "It's called Nia and it's a combination of yoga, dance with a spiritual aspect, and a little bit of Muay Thai (Thai kickboxing)." Pole-dancing, she notes, is popular in the States but it may not take hold here because it just might be too risqué and expensive. Then, there's dancing using a mini-trampoline.

But for Lala Ilao-Dinglasan, it's belly dancing that provides just the right amount of sass and sweat, and her gut feel is that it's a form of extraordinary exercise that's here to stay: "It's very fulfilling. And it's not just the tension or stress of having to stay fit or to lose weight. You're bringing a new aspect to people's lives, not just a boring workout. *Parang*, wow, it's like I'm helping people, teaching them something that also makes them have fun. You help make their lives more interesting."

For inquiries, please call Baila! Universal Dance and Fitness Studio at 809-0571 or 0926-2990712.

A Supermarket

...from page 4

ployees are college graduates. We try to get nutritionists, pharmacists, physical therapists, even tourism or HRM graduates, as long as they like talking with customers. If you're selling clothes, you can say 'that shirt goes with your skin color' and you can get away with it. But when it comes to health, you won't give anything to your children or your parents unless you're sure about it, so we need people who are intelligent and can interact with the customers."

Sia also maintains a policy of not hiring smokers, whom he feels might hurt the store's credibility. Eventually, his "evangelical" fervor rubs off on the staff, and they become firm believers themselves in a healthy lifestyle. They are kept up to date on the latest research developments with monthly quizzes. The questions are based on the Healthy Options newsletter, which is not just a marketing tool, but also a source of information on health products, their benefits and potential side effects. Each store also has a computer with "Health Notes"—a health information database—so customers can look up appropriate products for specific ailments, and find out what the current research findings are on their various properties.

"We don't insult our customers' intelligence. We do our best to keep up. At the end of the day, we don't play doctor either. We say: this is the current literature we have on this product, you can check with your doctor. For instance, we started offering vitamin supplements as part of a healthy lifestyle because people don't eat a healthy diet. Some doctors say vitamins just make your urine expensive, but the thing is, who eats five servings of vegetables a day?"

Sia practices what he preaches. At age 45, he takes medicine for hypertension, but he also eats a healthy diet and takes vitamins C and E as antioxidants, as well as saw palmetto extract, a herbal supplement, for prostate health.

"Our body has a very powerful healing system, but people abuse it," he says. "They sleep late, they smoke, they eat too much, they don't give the body the chance to heal itself. So I take my medicine. But in addition to that, I maintain a healthy lifestyle. It's not a matter of either/or: you have to keep things in balance."

Foodies

By Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz

Why She Really Is What She Eats

Nutritionist and weight management specialist Nadine Tengco, foremost local authority on the immensely popular South Beach Diet, is using her own unhealthy experience with seesaw dieting and a bad body image to help others eat better

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IF NADINE Tengco has become the foremost local authority on the South Beach Diet, credit that to her well-rounded past. This co-owner of Ihealth, a weight management and meal delivery service company in Manila, has had a lot of practice testing weight-loss theories—on herself.

"I was my own guinea pig," recalls this trim US-certified fitness nutritionist and weight management specialist who blames obese genes and a food-loving family for her early battle with the bulge. "My parents were both excellent cooks but my dad, who was general manager of a Manila-based German firm, was the better one. He was the *bayong* of the family because he would go around several markets in Metro Manila to get the best and freshest ingredients. His tripe for *callos* had to come from Guadalupe market, his chicken for *relleno* from Edsa Central, and so on. And to think we lived in Marikina!"

It didn't help that she came from a big clan—"literally and figuratively," Nadine says. "I am genetically pre-disposed to obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc." She had food issues, she adds. "The summer before my senior year in high school, I went on a severely restricted calorie diet. I eliminated rice and bread completely, but I lost perspective of things. I didn't eat even healthy foods like bananas because it was over 100 calories a piece. It was a journey into the extreme and I was in constant battle with myself. I developed a rather unhealthy body image."

The seesaw ride that most dieters experience while trying to lose weight would serve Nadine in good stead later when she realized how some so-called conventional wisdom on slimming down wasn't so wise after all. "I used to think that a calorie is a calorie and it doesn't matter where it comes from. Weight management was seen as being only about how much you eat, even if I couldn't explain why some people who ate like birds were still packing in the extra pounds of an elephant."

Discipline and determination

After that summer, she became increasingly aware of food and exercise, says this only girl in a brood of four who, aside from ballet, dance and piano, engaged in her brothers' sports. But the road to good health was long, treacherous and spiked with dangerous detours, one of which landed Nadine, then a college senior at the Ateneo de Manila, at the Manila Sanitarium hospital in Pasay. Fortunately, "a drop-dead gorgeous intern" decided to take care of her. "He saw me at my very worst: 10 lbs underweight, delirious, pale, ugly, and very sick," she says of the surgeon-partner with whom she has an 18-year relationship. That relationship stoked even more her interest in the business of medicine.

A self-described inquisitive person, Nadine also counts discipline and determination among her strongest points. Through sheer will power, she managed to junk her two packs-a-day smoking habit, working on "positive motivation and gentle reinforcement." She devoured self-help books, audio CDs and research from the Net, filling up evaluation tests and finding out her most vulnerable moments when she would most likely turn to cigarettes.

The shift to a healthier lifestyle activated her entrepreneurial bent as well, says this MBA graduate who occasionally worked as a business consultant. "I created a business out of my lifestyle," says Nadine. "Even if I walk my talk and practiced what I preached, I still believe in proper education if I am to be equipped to dispense advice to other people who would pay me for it. So I chose courses in fitness nutrition, lifestyle and weight management and exercise nutrition in the United States because they were not being offered in the Philippines."

As a business development and marketing strategy consultant, she shuttles regularly between Manila and the Bahamas, where she first heard of the South Beach Diet. "We get broadcasts from Florida where the SBD was popular. (It was, in fact, developed by South Florida-based Dr. Arthur Agatston). But I had a chance to study it properly when a friend in Manila asked me to pick up a copy of the book for him," says Nadine.

It changed her life.

"SBD was a catalyst," she says. "I learned more about the many other reasons people gained weight. I realized it was too simplistic to assume that 'too much food and not enough exercise' made all of us fat. What you eat is also important.

"I have also learned that there are physical, biochemical and metabolic reasons for cravings. So now to help my clients, I look into other causes of weight gain like nutritional deficiencies, history of chronic dieting, prescription drugs, under-active thyroid, and even emotional eating."

Great promises

Among ordinary dieters, SBD is popular "because it promises great things," observes Nadine. "It claims you can lose up to 13 lbs in just two weeks, plus it says you can also expect to lose most of that weight from your tummy. How can you resist a promise like that? It doesn't require complicated calculations, subscriptions, or merchandise purchases. There's also no starving or fasting involved and it takes heart health into consideration."

Overall, Nadine pronounces SBD a sound and "health-promoting diet. It is rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and lean protein and it does not omit any major food group." But, she adds, "Weight loss is an incidental benefit of the diet, it's not the major goal. Hence, its effectiveness and efficiency shouldn't be measured in those terms."

At the same time, cautions Nadine, "there is no one-size-fits-all diet, so what works for one will not work for another. The worst possible use of this diet is to treat it like a generic meal plan that can be eaten by everyone or to use it as a tool to jumpstart your weight loss." Catering services that deliver generic meals to people regardless of gender, age, current weight, height, percentage of body fat and medical conditions are not being faithful to SBD, adds this organizer of the Manila SBD Meet-up Group. The group meets monthly, and is part of the international community of SBD advocates in 250 cities worldwide.

Other misconceptions about SBD abound, she adds.

Portion control

"The worst possible misinformation being propagated about the diet is that it is okay to feel bad during the first few days. People who feel lightheaded, weak and dizzy are being told that those symptoms are truly a normal part of the diet. Under no circumstances are you to ignore those symptoms."

Although Ihealth delivers meals to SBD dieters as part of a comprehensive health program and has started recommending restaurants that serve similar SBD-friendly dishes, Nadine says home-cooked Filipino food can be as good even if it is rice-centered. "Going against our natural and cultural preference for rice is self-defeating," she says. "Our diet needs to reflect our inborn preferences or we won't be able to stick to it. But we can exercise portion control. Unless we do regular manual labor under the sun, like farmers, carpenters and fishermen, we can make do with half a cup of mixed white and red rice with two to three cups of vegetables."

For other SBD-inspired everyday Filipino meals, she recommends grilled lean meats, chicken or fish stuffed with tomatoes and herbs, salads made of backyard vegetables, steamed fish, soups like *nilaga* or *sinigang* using natural instead of instant souring mixes, *kinilaw*, and the use of low-sodium seasonings.

But more than having the right diet, Nadine says it is more important to have the right attitude about food and eating. "We should go beyond quick fixes and one-size-fits all solutions and adapt a kind view about ourselves. To lose weight and fat safely and keep it off, we have to modify our behavior, as in change our eating and exercise habits, and then ensure that these habits become a way of life. We cannot motivate ourselves because of fear, or punish ourselves for not looking the way we want to."

Quoting her group's philosophy, she adds: "At the end of the day, the South Beach Diet is yet another diet." The whole point? "Equip people with tools on how to stop dieting—and start living!" Q

For inquiries on Ihealth, contact tel. no. 436-6469, or 0917-2045346 and 0921-4446304, or email ihealthcircle@yahoo.com

How To Stop Dieting and Start Living

1. Eat smaller meals every three to four hours, hungry or not. Eating moderate amounts of food often to keep our blood sugar stable reduces cravings and keeps our metabolism working at optimum level. Skipping meals slows down our metabolism

2. Variety, moderation and balance should rule our food choices to help prevent food "re-addiction." Your diet should always include foods you like.

3. Work around your weaknesses. If you're fond of starches, choose whole grain high-fiber bread and divide servings into smaller portions so you don't overeat. Sugar-holics can have healthy low-cal sweets on hand, such as sugar-free chews, gelatin, etc.

4. Cultivate enjoyment in exercise and make it a habit and a way of life.

5. Be a label reader and be proactive about learning what goes into your food so you can make intelligent and informed choices.

6. The best strategy when dining out is to order plain foods without sauce, and dishes that require very little fat, sugar or salt for them to taste good. Avoid adding butter to bread or just skip the bread.

7. Check out the list of appetizers. You may find one or two that will satisfy you as an entrée. Or order appetizer portions of an entrée.

8. Order salad and soup, or either one. Ask for salad dressing on the side so you can add only as much as you want.

9. Starting a meal with soup begins the process of satisfying your hunger. It sends a signal to your brain that you are on your way to satiety.

10. If you plan to have dessert, you should probably skip the bread, rice, potatoes, or pasta. Instead, order a nice plate of sautéed vegetables with your protein.

11. Control your alcohol intake. Alcohol adds extra calories and stimulates appetite while decreasing your inhibitions—just what you don't need in a restaurant situation.

12. Sometimes the best way to satisfy a craving is by giving in to it. Give yourself a taste. A small amount of something you crave can diminish your desire for it. Q

This Week

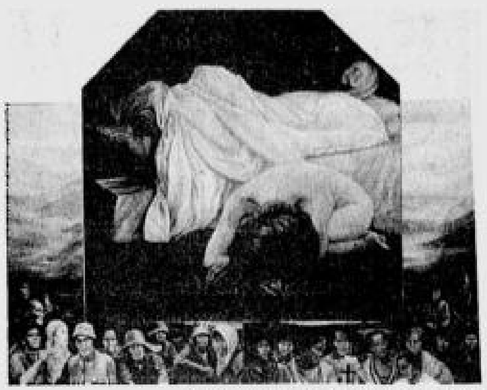
Art

After the Fact, an exhibit combining installations, paintings and collages by Juan Alcazaren at The Edge Gallery, UP Vargas Museum, Diliman, QC until Jan. 7.

Epistles on Death, Decay and Nostalgia, a group exhibit by Roland Ventura, Benjamin Elayda; Bonnie Gimenez, Imelda Cajipe Endaya, Nunelucio Alvarado, Pablo Baens Santos and Eduardo Paredes depicting contemporary issues in the country, until Jan. 15 at Hiraya Gallery, 530 UN Avenue, Ermita, Manila. For details, call 523-3331.

Arkuiris, a collaborative process by Renato R. Habulan with artists Allison David, Deborah Del-Pan, Molly Yap and Teresita C. Mapua, opens Jan. 6 and runs until Jan. 19 at SM Megamall Art Circle, 4/F, Building A.

Plastic, Eng Chan's new sculptures from junked plastic parts of appliances and water bottles, until Jan. 25 at The Lobby Gallery of the UP Vargas Museum.



Renato R. Habulan's *"Bulong ng Alon,"* on view at the SM Megamall Art Circle

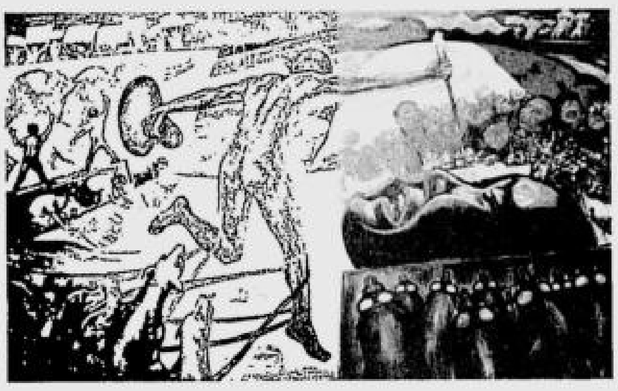
Remembering Inday, an exhibit featuring Inday Cadapan's early and rare oil paintings on canvas, figurative pastel on paper, ceramic tiles and painted sculpture, Jan. 7 to 26 at Gallery 139, 3/F, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati. For details, call 728-9724.

Music

The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra welcomes the new year with pianist Aileen Chanco in a concert titled **Symphonic Colors** on Jan. 7, 8 p.m. at the Cultural Center of the Philippines Main Theater. Maestro Eugene Castillo conducts. Repertoire consists of the Philippine premiere of Sukhi Kang's "Dâlha für Orchester," Josef Suk's "Ein Märchen (Fairy Tale) Suite, op. 16," Aaron Copland's "Appalachian Spring" and John Adams' "Century Rolls." Tickets available at Ticketnet (991-5555), Ticketworld at National Bookstore and Tower Records (891-9999) and CCP Box Office (832-3704).

Cinema

UP Film Institute ushers in the new year with screen offerings beginning with the Spanish coming-of-age tale, "Butterfly's Tongue," on Jan. 3, at 5 p.m. Other openers include the special return engagement of Pedro Almodovar's "Live Flesh" (Jan. 5, 2 p.m.) and Vicente Aranda's "The Naked Eye" (Jan. 5, 5 p.m.). To be shown on Jan. 6 at 5 p.m. is Christopher Hampton's "Imagining Argentina" (Official Selection for Golden Lion-2003 Venice International Film Festival). Next attractions consist of screenings for the forthcoming showcase of the best among the best of the 30 years of Metro Manila Film Festival from Jan. 7 to 12. Featured titles include "Himala" (1982), "Atsay" (1978), "Spirit Warriors 1 & 2," the "Mano Po" films and "Shake, Rattle and Roll" (1984). The culminating highlight of UP Film Institute's cinema offerings is the all-Asia selection to be launched on Jan. 13. Billed "PanAsiaVision," the distinct film series will present acclaimed titles from Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Thailand, Hong Kong, China among others. For details, call 926-3640 (direct line) or 926-2722 (telefax).



Pablo Baens Santos' "Manifesto," on view at the Hiraya Gallery

Atbp

The **Positivism art workshop** is conducting art lessons on how to draw the human figure. Participants are introduced to the use of pencil, charcoal, soft and oil pastel, and mixed media. The workshop is held every Saturday, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. starting Jan. 8 at Herald Suites, 2168 Chino Roces Ave., in front of Makati Cinema Square. For inquiries, call 811-2432.

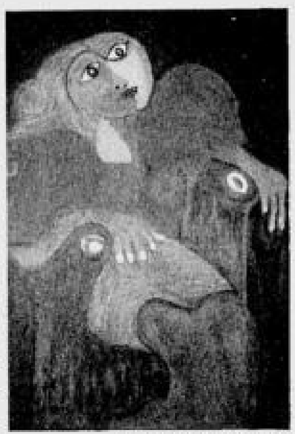
The **Real Estate Education Center** will conduct a **Continuing Education Seminar** needed for the renewal of the real estate brokers' licenses on Jan. 8, 15 and 22, 1 to 8 p.m. at Trattoria Ali Mall, Araneta Center, Quezon City. Resource speaker is Lawyer Ruben B. Palacio Jr. For inquiries, call 921-4520 and 921-2252.

A **Starting Your Own Preschool/Child Care Services (Business Orientation) seminar** will be held on Jan. 8, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the ACCM Building, 102 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Fee includes snacks, certificate and course manual. Reservations accepted until Jan. 7. For details, call 829-5711.

Corban Tutorial Center will begin a new batch of **Easy English seminars** on Jan. 15, 16, 22 and 23, from 2 to 5 p.m. The seminar is a comprehensive package of conversation, grammar and writing open to students, housewives and professionals. Fee is P3,500 inclusive of workbook, drill sheets and diagnostic test. Corban also conducts corporate seminars, IELTS Reviews and student tutorials. For inquiries, call 842-6665 and 809-3050 or visit Corban at MB Aguirre Building, President's Avenue cor. Elizalde Street, BF Parañaque.

There will be a **Basic Video Production seminar-workshop** to be held on Jan. 9, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the ACCM Building, 102 Valero St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Limited seats available. For reservations, call 829-5711.

The second **audition for full-time entertainment performers** in a new theme park in Asia will be held on Jan. 15 at the rehearsal hall of The San Miguel Foundation for the Performing Arts. The preliminary screening is open to professional vocalists at least 18 years old, possessing excellent musicianship and showmanship. Applicants are required to sing unaccompanied excerpts preferably from any animated feature film. Vocalists should prepare two vocal selections in English of contrasting styles (best 16 bars of each). Qualified vocalists who pass the preliminary screening will audition in front of an international casting team on Jan. 23. Audition forms are now available at the basement level of the San Miguel Corp. head office behind SM Megamall. Bring one recent 2x2 full color photo and detailed resumé. Deadline is Jan. 14. Applicants of the first audition are no longer qualified to apply for the new audition. For details, call Deo Dipasupil at 632-3769.



Inday Cadapan's "Seated Lady," on exhibit at Gallery 139

Photoworld Manila 2005, the country's biggest photo show, will be held from Feb. 3 to 8 at Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City with the theme "Breaking Point." Photographers as well as suppliers of the photo industry will mount a grand trade show and photo exhibit that will showcase the latest digital/film cameras, photo technology. A series of seminars will be conducted at the Asian Institute of Management from Feb. 4 to 7 led by American lecturer on digital imaging, Eddie Tapp. For details, call 813-7420 and 843-5341.

The Center for Environmental Awareness and Education and Ford Conservation and Environmental Grants invite all documentary filmmakers, from amateurs to professionals, to tell their own stories of the beauty and degradation facing the Philippines and its people through the **Moonrise Film Festival** to be held in August. Aside from being screened during the film festival, winners of the annual competition will also get to see their film documentaries aired on national television via the cable channels, and toured in schools all over the country. All documentaries focusing on our country's environment and culture made from 1999 onwards are eligible to compete. Entries should not have won in any previous competitions. They can be submitted in VHS, VCD, or DVD format, with a running time of 45 minutes or less. Download submission forms and check out the festival mechanics at www.moonrisefilmfest.org. Deadline for submission of entries is May 31, 5 p.m. Submit or mail entries to The Submissions Curator, The Center for Environmental Awareness and Education, Unit 3A Gilmore Heights, #18 Granada cor. Castilla Sts., Barangay Valencia, Quezon City 1100. For inquiries, call Froi at 721-7360.

The **12th TravelTour Expo 2005** will be held on Feb. 4 to 6 at SM Megatrade Halls 1, 2 and 3. The expo promises to offer great travel possibilities and the best finds by gathering a good mix of travel agents, tour operators, cruises, airlines, hotels, resorts, theme parks, national tourism offices, government offices and travel shops. Exclusive rates and special deals will be available during the expo to meet clients' preferences and budget.

MWAHAHA, the country's only humor magazine, is now out with its fourth issue. The bi-monthly magazine, under the Mango Comics label, features major cartoonists from almost all of the major newspapers in the country. The artists include Rene Aranda of The Philippine Star; TonTon Young of Manila Bulleting, Manix Abrera, Tatum Milambiling, Lyra Abueg Garcellano, Steven Pabalinas and Steph Bravo of the Philippine Daily INQUIRER, and Manny Francisco of The Tribune. The magazine is available at National Bookstore, Filbars, Comics Quest, Comics Central Headquarters, Mag-Net, Magazine Exchange, convenience stores and selected schools.

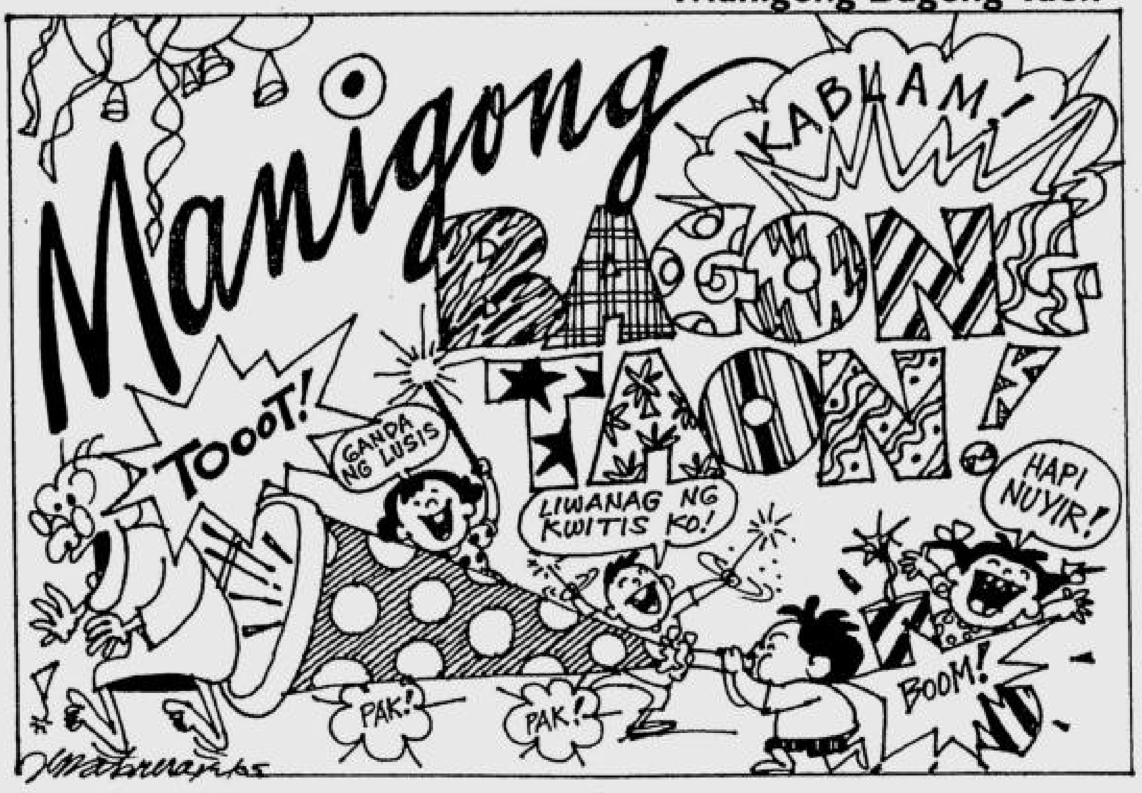
For this week's bands and schedules call:
- Hard Rock Café (893-4662-65)
- Virgin Café : QC (926-7982)
- '70s Bistro: 46 Anonas St., QC (922-0492)
- Hobbit House: 1801 Mabini St., Malate, Manila (521-7604)
- Strumm's: El Pueblo, Ortigas (637-3009)

The SUNDAY INQUIRER MAGAZINE welcomes listings of events in and outside Metro Manila. Please send announcements at least two weeks in advance, and include contact numbers for inquiries on schedules

Pinoy Nga!

By Jess Abrera

Manigong Bagong Taon


Manigong
BAGONG
TAON!
KABLAM!
TOOOT!
GANDA NG LUSIS
LIWANAG NG KWITIS KO!
HAPI NUYIR!
PAK!
PAK!
BOOM!

The Word

By Fr. Ruben J. Villote

2005: Year of Hope—and Surprises

The beginning of a new year, like the beginning of each day, is filled with surprises

EPIPHANY series in two parts (Part 1):

Today is our first date with the Word for this year. It is also Epiphany Sunday, which our *lolos* and *lolas* used to call *Pista ng Tatlong Hari* (Feast of the Three Kings).

It is a day of surprises, first, because the "Magi from the East" surprised King Herod with a visit asking where they could find the newborn king of the Jews. Second, because the Magi were surprised to find the newborn king among the poor; and third, because we're surprised that the Magi, who were non-Jews, were searching for the King of the Jews. "We saw His star," they said, "and have come to do Him homage." (Mt 2:2)

Our God, who is a God of surprises, might yet swing a surprise for us in 2005. The beginning of a new year, like the beginning of each day, is filled with surprises.

Henri J.M. Nouwen writes: "Each day holds surprises. But only if we expect it can we see, hear, or feel it when it comes to us. Let's not be afraid to receive each day's surprise, whether it comes to us as sorrow or joy. It will open a new place in our hearts, a place where we can welcome new friends and celebrate more fully our shared humanity."

Celebrating our shared humanity transcends religious and social barriers: presidents breaking bread with farmers, Magi with carpenters, Jews with non-Jews, Christians with non-Christians, saints with non-saints, Christians from different sects and denominations among themselves—all of us celebrating our differences without surrendering our convictions, and celebrating our convictions without surrendering and belittling our differences.

This reminds me of my friend from Sorsogon, Mario Fungo, or Toots to his friends. He is the president of Building and Organizing Christian Communities (BOCC) in Sorsogon. He is also the founding chair of the Center for Peace and Environmental Concerns (CPEC) in Sta. Magdalena, Sorsogon, a member of the Konsensyang Pilipino and the AKKAPKA movement for non-violence.

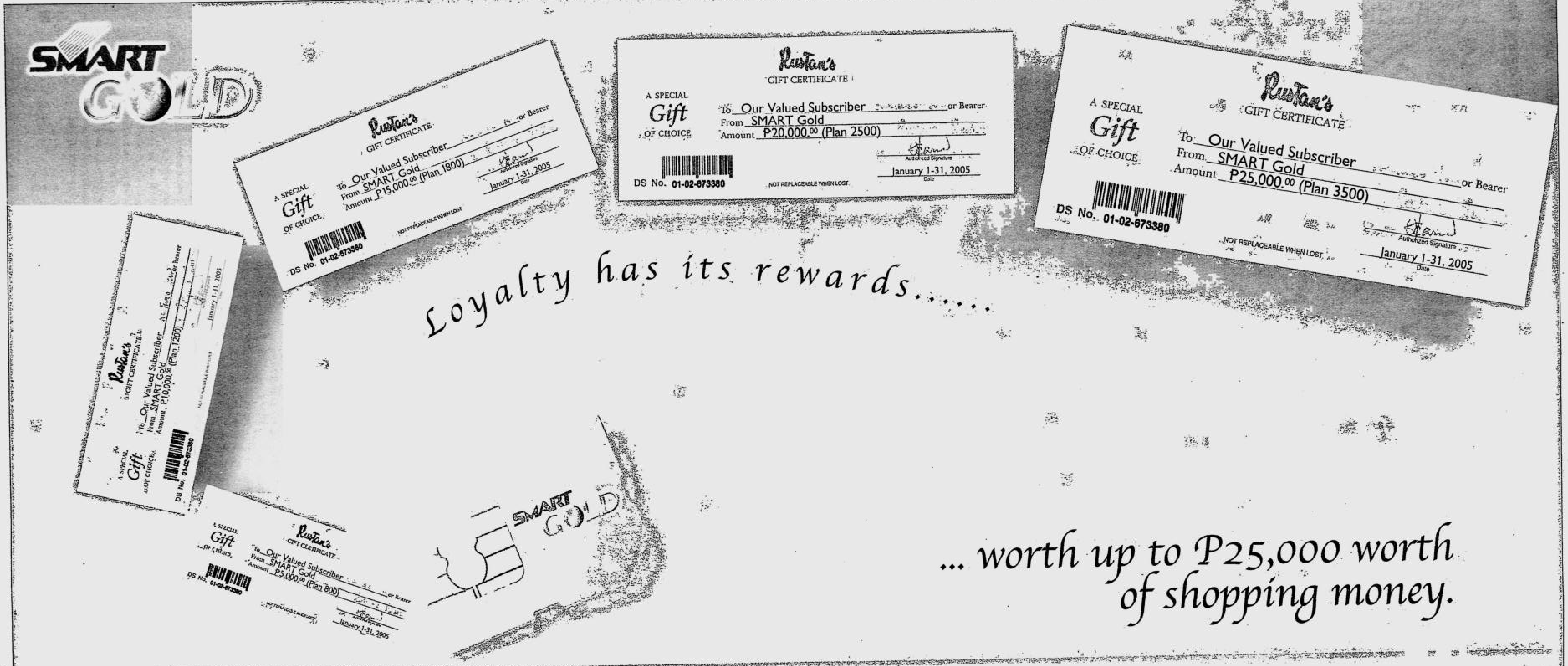
Recently he attended the Global Summit Conference of the United Religious Initiative in Stanford, California. He said that the participants come from different religious and spiritual traditions and cultural backgrounds. Among them were a Buddhist peace-and-justice activist from Bangkok, a Brooklyn-based Hindu housewife who works with abandoned children and those suffering from AIDS, Sikh and Zoroastrian leaders from India, and the Anglican Church observer at the United Nations.

This summit, Toots said, was about "creating a community based on hospitality, celebration and shared calling to be of service to the world. It was about transformation. The disparate group quietly became a community gathered around a central purpose: to seek ways to make peace in a world of violence, seeking particularly how to help religions make peace among themselves so that they may be a global force for peace among nations... and for the healing of the environment."

The vision of this man, Toots, is the vision of Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, of the Apostle Paul, of Francis of Assisi, of John Paul II, of Brother Roger of Taize, and all of us who "with all creation groan and suffer in our innermost being, eagerly awaiting a day when God will free us from the chains of corruption and death, and bring the whole creation into the same glorious freedom as the children of God." (Rom 8:20-21)

Whatever happens in 2005, we are invited to hold on to this vision, the vision of an uncertain future, yes, but a future that contains a promise. Let us hold this promise close to our hearts, always expecting a surprise, as we read Isaiah:

> "The wolf will lie with the lamb,
> the panther lie down with the kid,
> the calf lion and the fat-stock beast together,
> with a little boy to lead them.
> The cow and the bear will graze,
> their young will lie down together.
> The lion will eat hay like the ox.
> The infant will play over the den of the adder;
> the baby will put his hands into the viper's lair.
> No hurt, no harm will be done
> on all my holy mountain,
> for the country will be full of knowledge of Yahweh
> as the waters cover the sea."
>
> (Isa 11:6-9)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